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RESPONSES TO FOREIGN IMMIGRATION: NATIVISM AND  
ETHNIC TOLERANCE IN ALBERTA, 1880-1920

By



Howard Palmer

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
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The undersigned certify that they have read,  
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1880-1920 submitted by Howard Palmer in partial fulfil-  
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## ABSTRACT

Before World War I, native Canadians who were anxious to promote the economic development of the west welcomed immigrants from Britain, north-western Europe, and the United States who were culturally similar to themselves. Because of the relatively small numbers of non-English speaking settlers who entered, nativism did not develop markedly during this period, although some opposition developed toward "polygamous" Mormons, "unruly" Hungarians, and "diseased" Chinese.

Nativism experienced a significant upsurge between 1898 and 1902 with the rapid increase in the number of eastern Europeans coming to Alberta in response to the immigration promotion campaign of Laurier's government. The Conservative party, some Protestant clergy and some Liberals (especially Edmonton's influential M.P. Frank Oliver) expressed fears that illiterate peasants from Europe and Asia would undermine Anglo-Saxon political institutions because of their lack of experience with self-government, that they would destroy the relative social homogeneity of the west and that they would threaten middle class patterns of life.

Native Canadians saw three possible solutions to the "threats" which southern and eastern Europeans posed: either assimilation to an Anglo-Saxon norm, or immigration restriction or both. The assimilation programs sponsored by schools, Protestant denominations, patriotic organizations and social welfare organizations combined nativist fears of what would happen if immigrants were not assimilated with humanitarian concern for the social and personal problems faced by immigrants.

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Anti-Oriental sentiment was more intense and more pervasive than nativist sentiment directed toward central, southern and eastern Europeans (despite the fact that there were substantially fewer Orientals) because Orientals were more distinct in culture and "race".

Tolerance towards minority groups was promoted by economic prosperity and the contribution which the immigrants made to this prosperity, the predominantly rural settlement of immigrants, immigrant political power, the ascendancy of the Liberal party (which was generally committed to defending immigration) and the pervasiveness of Christian and British "fair play" values. Labor and farm organizations which grew rapidly after the turn of the century usually promoted ethnic tolerance as necessary for class or occupational solidarity, and the presence of a French-Canadian minority group which had a charter group status in Canada gave at least some degree of legitimacy to cultural diversity.

Nativist sentiment directed toward central, southern, and eastern Europeans did not approach in intensity or pervasiveness the anti-German and anti-enemy alien sentiment which developed during World War I: German language newspapers were suppressed, enemy aliens were dismissed from their jobs, unnaturalized German and Austro-Hungarian miners were interned, schools and churches were closed and personal reprisals were common. While there was some sympathy during the war for minority ethnic groups from Austria-Hungary (the Ukrainians were an exception), hostility towards all "foreigners" became widespread with the return of the veterans who began



competing with them for jobs, and as immigrants became associated in the public eye with labor radicalism.





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## INTRODUCTION

Although the study of the social histories of minority groups in western Canada has become important as Canadians search for a national identity and as members of minority groups seek their historical roots in Canada, the study of the attitudes of the dominant society toward these people is just beginning. Ethnic and religious prejudice and nationalism are two very important forces in the modern world and have been so intimately linked together in movements opposing minorities that some historians have adopted a unifying concept, nativism,<sup>1</sup> to describe the amalgam of these two forces. Nativism draws on cultural antipathies and ethnocentric judgments and translates them into a desire to eliminate the "enemies" of Canadian institutions and values. My own concern about the disruptive effects of nativism stimulated an interest in the study of opposition to minority groups and its causes, but the study of ethnic tolerance and cooperation among minority groups and their causes has been of equal interest to me.

The word "nativism" was coined in the 1840's by the opponents of anti-foreign parties in New York. But the word can usefully be extended to other countries since it points to the underlying importance of the recurrence of

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John Higham's Strangers in the Land (New York, 1967), discusses the concept of nativism and its history in the United States from 1865 to 1925. He defines nativism as "intense opposition to an internal minority on the ground of its foreign. . .connection". (p. 4) I have used the concept as "opposition to an internal religious or ethnic minority on the ground of its foreign connection."





unfavorable attitudes and hostile treatment of people with a culture, religion, or skin color different from that of a country's "charter" group. This thesis attempts not only to find manifestations of nativism in Alberta, but to discover the historical origins of its various strands, and the causes behind its manifestation at certain periods of time. It attempts to examine the ideological and social sources of nativism, to ascertain how these ideas fared at various levels of society and how these ideas were translated into action. It also examines the changes in the ideology and focus of nativism.

Several considerations qualify the usefulness of the concept of "nativism" in a western Canadian context. First, the lack of a highly developed sense of Canadian nationalism before World War I together with various influences promoting tolerance meant that hostility towards minority groups did not reach the general level of hostility that it did in most areas of the U.S. But hostility was present, and the concept of "nativism" unites the two forces of ethnic prejudice and nationalism which were in fact inseparable. To discuss the phenomena as "bigotry" or "racial prejudice" would not only obscure the discussion by introducing words which are generally considered more value laden than "nativism" but would miss the underlying importance of the way in which nationalism affected the development of hostile attitudes toward internal minority groups.



Second, one might question the usefulness of the term "nativism" in connection with the treatment of French-Canadians in Alberta, most of whom had ancestors in Canada long before the arrival of the ancestors of the Ontario people who moved out to western Canada. Were not French-Canadians a "charter group" not only in eastern Canada but also in western Canada? While indeed they considered themselves a charter group their claim was not always accepted by English speaking Canadians and they were often regarded as "foreigners" in the same sense as Scandinavians and Germans--they were not regarded as having undesirable personal characteristics, but they would have to become part of the Anglo-Canadian society which was developing in Alberta.

Third, the fact that few of the Canadians or British immigrants who responded negatively to European or Oriental immigration were born in western Canada leads one to wonder if they were attempting to preserve long-standing traditions. But this criticism ignores the essential point that the English-Canadian opinion leaders feared that the large scale central and eastern European immigration would prevent the establishment of the "British institutions" which they regarded as being so important. Canada's position as a former colony gave a unique status to British immigrants--while there might be opposition to the immigration of urban laborers and remittance men from England, there was no incongruity in British immigrants participating in, and in some cases,



leading, movements for immigration restriction. British immigrants were accepted as equals and their ideas and institutions were not regarded as foreign.

Several important issues were raised for the country's charter groups by the immigration of non-British and non-French immigrants to Canada. Were the values and institutions of Canadian society fixed? If so, what were they? Or would Canadian values and institutions emerge through the mingling of different cultures? Or was cultural diversity itself the desirable goal for Canadian society? Since these questions struck at the core of thought about the nature of Canada, it is not surprising that almost every English-Canadian opinion leader<sup>1</sup> in Alberta between 1886 and 1920 either wrote on or publicly discussed immigration. Much can be learned about the way Canadians perceived themselves and their society by examining their response to foreign immigrants. Did Canadians really view their society as a cultural mosaic as opposed to an American

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<sup>1</sup> These included newspaper editors and journalists, politicians, lawyers, clergymen, businessmen and educators.



melting pot as many social scientists have recently asserted?<sup>1</sup>

Closely tied to the question of the desirable goal for Canadian society outside Quebec (or, as this applied to immigrants, the desirable assimilation ideology) were the questions of the relative desirability of particular immigrant groups and immigration policy. We will examine the stereotypes which English-Canadians had of various ethnic groups since the question of who should be allowed into Canada was largely determined by these stereotypes. The accuracy of these stereotypes will be of secondary concern; the important point is that people acted on these stereotypes at both an interpersonal and public level.<sup>2</sup> Opposition to specific ethnic groups was quickly transformed into attempts to restrict any further influx.

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<sup>1</sup>It would not be an exaggeration to suggest that this is one of the central myths of current Canadian nationalism. See John Porter, The Vertical Mosaic (Toronto, 1965) pp. 70-72.

<sup>2</sup>Use of the word "stereotype" is not meant to imply that the native Canadians' perception of each minority group was always inaccurate. Hostility did not always stem from a mere lack of knowledge of the other group; the cultural patterns of minorities often violated the basic values of the dominant society.





INTRODUCTION

Questions of the desirability of non-British minority groups did not weigh heavily on the minds of the eastern Canadians and British immigrants who arrived in the sparsely populated Northwest Territories in the late 1870's and early 1880's to establish farms and ranches. The eastern Canadians in the Northwest Territories who, through their newspapers, articulated the interests of the settlers, urged the government to promote immigration, and welcomed any immigrants from northern Europe. But serious questions about the future nature of the society were raised by the arrival in the late 1880's of small numbers of Mormon farmers, eastern European miners, and Chinese laundrymen. While nativism did not develop markedly during this period, the main issues concerning minority groups which were to be discussed for the next forty years (and longer) were raised, and the stereotypes were developed which conditioned the reaction to these groups when larger numbers arrived after 1896.

There are several reasons for the comparatively minor degree of nativistic sentiment in Alberta as compared to the United States. The problems in the United States associated with immigrants in cities obviously did not exist in largely rural Alberta,

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<sup>1</sup>This thesis does not limit its discussion to the provisional district of Alberta in the period before the creation of the province of Alberta in 1905, but includes all the area which eventually formed part of the province. (Parts of eastern Alberta had not been part of the provisional district of Alberta.)



and the arguments of those who attacked free immigration in the United States because of contracting horizons in the West could have no appeal in western Canada. Organized labor was absent, so no opposition developed to immigrant workers, and only a few mine owners saw in the foreigner an agent of unrest.<sup>1</sup> Economic checks on nativism were also important since western Canadians agreed that a rapid increase in population was desirable. The idea of Canada as a home for the oppressed had little currency, but Christian values were important in promoting tolerance. Probably most important was the fact that the total proportion of non-English-speaking settlers was small, and many of these were either French, German, or Scandinavian.<sup>2</sup>

#### Immigration Policy

One of the essential elements of Macdonald's National Policy was promotion of immigration into western Canada to establish a market for eastern manufactured goods and to secure the west for Canada against the threat of annexation by the United States. Despite what appeared to some westerners to be deliberate delays in settlement, the federal government pursued an active policy, concentrating on securing British immigrants.

During the 1870's realizing the difficulties of

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<sup>1</sup>See John Higham, Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism 1860-1925 (2nd. ed.; New York, 1967, chap. iii.)

<sup>2</sup>Only 6,560 of Alberta's population of 25,277 in 1891 was foreign born and 5,399 of these were born in either Britain or the U.S. Census of Canada, 1891, p. 362.



attracting British agriculturalists, the dominion government encouraged the settlement of ethnic and religious groups in the west. Icelanders fleeing volcanic eruptions and failing fisheries came to Manitoba in 1875 and settled along the shore of Lake Winnipeg and Mennonites fleeing a Russification campaign in the Mennonite settlements in the Ukraine came to southern Manitoba in the same year. To encourage these movements, the government gave both groups special concessions, including large reserves of land for both and military exemption for Mennonites. The government during the 1880's also encouraged the settlement of Americans, Russian Jews, Hungarians, Scots and Germans in the west and promoted the repatriation of French-Canadians living in the U.S.<sup>1</sup> Despite the establishment of these religious and ethnic communities, settlement proceeded slowly.

To speed the peopling of the west, the government began to encourage settlement directed by colonization companies.<sup>2</sup> Another major attempt to stimulate immigration came in 1892 when the government transferred control of immigration to the Department of the Interior in order to make one set of officials responsible for reception and

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<sup>1</sup>See Norman Macdonald, Canada: Immigration and Colonization 1842-1908 (Toronto, 1966) Chapter XI.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., Chap. XII.



distribution of immigrants. The government set up a liberal commission policy and sent practical farmers to northern Europe and the United States to promote immigration. Nevertheless, immigration to Canada remained small and could not even keep pace with emigration out of Canada.

The slowness of settlement in Alberta before 1896 had several causes. The British and Canadian ranchers who established themselves in southern Alberta in the early 1880's discouraged settlement. They were aided by the widespread belief that the Palliser Triangle, which included southern Alberta, was not fit for agricultural settlement. This latter notion, coupled with agricultural depression, the Riel Rebellion, which aroused fears of Indian uprising, the absence of Canadian Pacific branch lines, the lack of suitable farming techniques, and unfavorable markets and prices slowed settlement before 1896. Extensive land holdings by the Hudson's Bay Company, the Canadian Pacific Railway and the colonization companies also discouraged settlement, and since land policy was almost as liberal south of the boundary and cheap and good land was still available, fear of frost and drought continued to turn westward moving farmers to the U.S.<sup>1</sup> But the end of the depression in 1896, and the initiation of new immigration policies resulted in increased movement of immigrants to western Canada.

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<sup>1</sup>Paul F. Sharp, Whoop-Up Country, (Minneapolis: 1955) p. 215; and C.M. MacInnes, In the Shadow of the Rockies, (London: 1930) Chap. XIV. See also Macleod Gazette, May 9, 1885 (hereafter cited as M.G.).





While the ranchers discouraged settlement (for economic rather than nativistic reasons) the Canadian Pacific, local merchants and the newspapers which promoted their causes cried out for increased immigration. The Canadian Pacific needed immigrants to do construction work, to buy the railway land grants, to provide passengers for the railway, to produce the crops for the railway to carry, and to buy the consumer and manufactured goods shipped out from the east.<sup>1</sup> Small town merchants were eager to attract settlers, no matter what their nationality or religion, and the main purpose of the newspapers which were established in the early 1880's at Macleod, Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, Calgary, and Edmonton was to call into being the very population they aimed to serve. The booster press cried out for new settlers.

The newspapers<sup>2</sup> which had been established by recent arrivals from eastern Canada constantly lamented the paucity

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<sup>1</sup> J.B. Hedges, Building the Canadian West (New York: 1939).

<sup>2</sup>The reliance this thesis places on newspapers should not be construed to mean that the author believes that there is a one to one relationship between newspaper opinion and public opinion. While in most cases, the press acted as opinion leaders, molding and directing public opinion, there were some sectors of the society whose views were not expressed through the newspapers. An attempt has been made to locate as many alternative sources as possible: government documents, personal papers, and personal interviews, but in the last analysis, more weight has been given to newspaper opinion than is probably justified since this is the only comprehensive (in terms of both time period and variety of opinion reflected) source available.

(continued on next page)



of immigrants and complained that too many British immigrants and eastern Canadians were going to the U.S. rather than to western Canada.<sup>1</sup> The press demanded that the government develop a more vigorous immigration policy and that attempts be made to promote the immigration of farmers and farm laborers from Britain to Canada.<sup>2</sup> But since a bold policy was needed, agents might even have to depend on foreign immigrants (i.e. non-British) to increase immigration.<sup>3</sup> The Calgary Herald wrote that the Calgary district would be prepared to offer a "hearty welcome" to men of all races and creeds - English, Irish, Scotch; French, German, Norwegian, Icelander - Catholic, Protestant, Lutheran or Mennonite:

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fn.contd.

The relationship between public opinion and newspaper opinion is probably much higher in the period before 1920 than it is now, since newspapers were usually closely tied to political parties, and in some cases (e.g. Frank Oliver, W.A. Buchanan) the editor ran for public office, so it is possible to get some idea of what the public thought of the papers' editorial opinion (assuming that some people vote on the basis of issues).

<sup>1</sup>Calgary Herald (hereafter cited as C.H.), July 31, 1890; M.G., Dec. 10, 1891; Edmonton Bulletin (hereafter cited as E.B.), July 6, 1889, Feb. 15, 1890, April 20, 1893, Dec. 16, 1896.

<sup>2</sup>M.G., May 4, 1883; Lethbridge News (hereafter cited as L.N.), May 8, 1889, April 2, 1890, April 10, 1891; Medicine Hat Times (hereafter cited as M.H.T.), Feb. 23, 1883, March 20, 1890, Dec. 3, 1891; E.B. Aug. 2, 1890.

<sup>3</sup>M.H.T., March 20, 1890; C.H., April 3, 1889.



Settlements of separate nationalities may not be ideal settlements at first, but we must trust to time to bring about a fusion of all races. All we should ask in regard to immigrants and settlers is: are they healthy, industrious and moral living? If they fill the bill they will be received with open hearts and the difficulties of settlement smoothed as much as possible. 1

While the press wanted northern European settlers, they expressed reservations about central and eastern Europeans, since as Frank Oliver argued, these were "bound to be drawn from the poorer and less ambitious classes".<sup>2</sup> Oliver, who had worked for George Brown's Toronto Globe and the Winnipeg Free Press before coming to Alberta and establishing the Edmonton Bulletin in 1880, believed that people of non-British backgrounds should not be encouraged to come to Canada since their values were different from those of Canadians and therefore they could not help in the building of a society based on the Ontario model. Commenting on the government's decision to send immigration agents to Scandinavia and central Europe, Oliver argued:

While it is a businesslike, a statesmanlike, and a Christianlike policy to offer land and homes to industrious people no matter who they may be, there is a difference between allowing them to have these lands and homes and soliciting them to come...It would be the difference between having people who will aid us in the work of forwarding the cause of civilization, and others perhaps equally industrious whose ideas regarding what constitutes the advancement of civilization differ so radically from ours that their efforts must necessarily be a drag on ours. The outflow of people from the British

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<sup>1</sup> C.H., Jan. 27, 1892. It is indicative of the Herald's world view that "all races" meant northern Europeans.

<sup>2</sup> E.B., Aug. 2, 1890. See also L.N., Aug. 31, 1893.



Isles, were it directed to Canada, would be ample to fill the country. The country needs men with heads as well as hands, who can think as well as feel...who are producers and consumers not merely because they must produce if they consume, but because they have the ambition to improve their condition to the utmost limit of civilization....<sup>1</sup>

Oliver also opposed the policy which the Department of the Interior instituted in 1893 of giving allowances to steamship companies for securing passengers (arguing that the steamship companies were behind the policy) since it would encourage indiscriminate immigration, and discourage the selection of immigrants "who shall have the necessary qualities of health, endurance, ambition, intelligence, and capital, without which they are not fitted to become pioneers in the North West."<sup>2</sup> Jews, Mennonites, and Chinese were not among those Oliver considered desirable. In an editorial soundly condemning the government for not protecting squatters in the west, Oliver stated:

Let it be remembered that those for whom protection is asked are not Mennonites or Jews, or Chinamen, or of any foreign nation or strange class, they are either native born Canadians, or men from other countries who have thrown in their lot completely with Canada and have a right to the same consideration as those who happen to be born on the soil. <sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., Feb. 2, 1893.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>E.B., June 10, 1882.





Oliver maintained this opposition to eastern European immigration and later, as Minister of the Interior, was originator of the 1906 and 1910 immigration laws which restricted eastern European immigration.

Some worried about the alleged radical tendencies of continental Europeans. The editor of the Macleod Gazette ran an editorial which expressed satisfaction that western Canada had not been plagued by the "revolutionary and anarchial hordes who have rushed into the U.S. during the past twelve years from the conspirators' dens of central and southern Europe."<sup>1</sup>

Thus, during the 1880's and early 1890's, Albertans were torn between the pressing economic need to populate the prairies and their reservations about securing immigrants whose educational and cultural backgrounds were different--many cases radically so--from their own. Consequently the editorial opinions expressed reflected varying degrees of optimism and pessimism regarding the impact of non-British immigrants, and were in many cases marked by a significant degree of ambiguity towards these immigrants. This ambiguity was to become even more apparent after 1896 with the arrival of greater numbers of southern European, eastern European, and Asian immigrants. Subsequent conflicts served to intensify nativistic attitudes and to fortify restrictionist arguments.

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<sup>1</sup>M.G., Dec. 29, 1892.



## BRITISH

While the young, upper-class British ranchers, British farmers and British miners<sup>1</sup> were considered to be Alberta's most desirable immigrants, some reservations were expressed in regard to the British gentry's practice of sending second sons to Alberta ranches to find their fortunes. The Lethbridge News objected that western Canada was not the place for a gentleman rancher or a younger son. ". . . he is not indigenuous to Canada and being an exotic, soon finds the bracing atmosphere of the prairies too much for his hot-house culture." British immigrants raised in leisure did not have business skills needed to succeed, and many of those who did come soon dissipated their small fortunes and deteriorated. The News conceded, however, that some inexperienced men would succeed in any country.<sup>2</sup> With increased English and English-Canadian immigration, the French-Canadian Catholic clergy worried about eventual attacks on French schools and separate schools.<sup>3</sup>

## AMERICANS

The few Americans who did come to Alberta between 1880 and 1896 were warmly welcomed by most sectors of the Society. The American whiskey traders who had aroused

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<sup>1</sup>In 1891, 4,148 of 25,277 Albertans were British born. Census of Canada, 1891, p. 362. The ranchers settled along the foothills from Macleod to High River, and the British farmers were scattered throughout the province.

<sup>2</sup>L.N., June 19, 1889.

<sup>3</sup>See R.M. Lupul, "Relations in Education Between The State and the Roman Catholic Church in the Canadian Northwest with Special Reference to the Provisional District of Alberta from 1880 to 1905", (unpublished Ph.D., Harvard, 1963), p. 221.



the wrath of the Hudson's Bay Company and Christian missionaries because of their treatment of the Indians--which led to the North-West Mounted Police being sent to Alberta to restore order--were largely gone by 1880. Most of those who did remain became "respectable citizens". The next group of Americans to arrive were the ranch hands who drove cattle in from the United States between 1882 and 1886 and many of them were induced to stay by the British and Canadian ranch owners. These Americans were considered most important acquisitions to ranch life, since they brought with them knowledge of ranch techniques. Some drifted back to the U.S. but others remained to set up their own ranches. A few, including the notable George Lane, married into the British ranch community; but for the most part, the Americans formed a group separate from the British. There was little friction between the two groups because, as L.G. Thomas pointed out, ". . . a strong practical sympathy existed and each class was secure in the consciousness of its own superiority."<sup>1</sup>

Although before 1896 a few isolated groups of American settlers came to the Macleod, Wetaskiwin, Bardo, Fort Saskatchewan areas, and to the land along the Calgary and Edmonton railway, the major portion of the immigrants from the U.S. who came to Alberta arrived after 1896 since

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<sup>1</sup>L.G. Thomas, "The Ranching Period in Southern Alberta", (unpublished M.A., University of Alberta, 1935), p. 89.



an economic depression in the U.S. prevented an outflow of American farmers before then.<sup>1</sup> Government officials and the newspapers were delighted by the arrival of these farmers since they brought with them agricultural skills and capital, and were culturally similar to "native Canadians". One government report referred to them as "a most valuable class of settlers" and the Calgary Herald described the Americans at Olds as a "splendid class of settlers".<sup>2</sup>

With the extension of the Calgary and Edmonton railway to Macleod in 1892, a steady flow of settlers from eastern Canada and the U.S. began arriving, and many of them began breaking land in the Mosquito Creek, Kipp, and Pincher Creek areas. The antagonism which developed between American farmers and British ranchers in southern Alberta lacked nativist significance since it was based on a conflict of economic interests and did not extend to fears of a threat to national life.<sup>3</sup>

The few American Negroes in Alberta attracted little attention. Ranchers respected Negro rancher John Ware.<sup>4</sup> Some hostility towards Negroes was, however, aroused after

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<sup>1</sup>M.L. Hansen, and J.B. Brebner, The Mingling of the Canadian and American Peoples (New Haven: 1940) p. 219. In 1891 there were 1,251 American born in Alberta of a total population of 25,277. Census of Canada 1891, p. 362.

<sup>2</sup>Canada, Parliament, Department of the Interior Report (hereafter cited as D.I.). 1892, Sessional Paper #13, p.4.

<sup>3</sup>L.G. Thomas, "The Ranching Period", p. 39.

<sup>4</sup>M.G., June 23, 1885.





an assault on a Negro girl by another Negro in Calgary in 1888.<sup>1</sup>

Although the various Mennonite groups, who came to the Calgary area beginning in 1891, might have aroused suspicion had they been entering an ethnically and religiously homogeneous society, they were given a warm reception and were described as a "sturdy, frugal, industrious class of farmers".<sup>2</sup> The press welcomed the Old Mennonites who settled at Gladys and the Mennonite Brethren at Carstairs and Didsbury.<sup>3</sup>

#### SCANDINAVIANS AND GERMANS

Scandinavian and German immigrants, who came to form the largest non-British groups in Alberta prior to 1900, were readily accepted not only because their cultural background was similar to the Canadian and British settlers already in Alberta, but also because many had resided for some time in the mid-west United States and had acquired agricultural skills which were useful when they moved into western Canada after 1890 with the closing of the American frontier. The first Scandinavians in western Canada had been the Icelanders who had come to the area around Lake Winnipeg in 1875, Swedes who came to Minnedosa, Manitoba and New Stockholm, Saskatchewan in the early 1880's and

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<sup>1</sup>C.H., May 30, 1888.

<sup>2</sup>C.H., May 3, 1893. Most of the Mennonites came from the United States.

<sup>3</sup>C.H., Jan. 1, 1890.



Norwegians who came to Numedal in southern Manitoba and Glen Mary in Saskatchewan. The success of these settlers and the success of Scandinavian farmers in the mid-west United States cleared the path and eased the reception for the Scandinavians who began arriving in Alberta in the late 1880's.

The first group of Scandinavians to arrive in Alberta were Icelanders from North Dakota who settled at Markerville, west of Red Deer, in 1888. They were followed in 1892 by Swedes from North Dakota who began farming in the Wetaskiwin area as land was opened up with the completion of the Calgary-Edmonton railway. Other Swedes soon settled the region west of Calmar and this whole area of central Alberta soon became the center of concentration of Swedish-Americans in western Canada.<sup>1</sup> A few Norwegians arrived in Calgary in 1880 but it was not until the early 1890's that Norwegian settlement in Alberta reached significant proportions when Norwegians settled in the Camrose area.

Both the press and government officials welcomed the Scandinavians. The Calgary Herald stated that the Icelanders would make good citizens and the Bulletin expressed similar sentiments about the Swedes at Wetaskiwin.<sup>2</sup> Western Canada's immigration agent reported in 1892 that the Scandinavians were physically the "finest race" that had

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<sup>1</sup> Helge Nelson, The Swedes and Swedish Settlements in North America, (New York: 1943) p. 359.

<sup>2</sup> C.H., Dec. 4, 1889; April 17, 1889, July 23, 1890. E.B., April 20, 1892, Sept. 8, 1892.



arrived in Canada.<sup>1</sup>

During the 1880's and 1890's Germans from the United States and from various parts of eastern Europe began arriving in Alberta and established settlements in the Medicine Hat, Pincher Creek and Calgary areas during the 1880's and in the Edmonton and Wetaskiwin areas between 1891 and 1894 with the opening of the Calgary and Edmonton railway. These settlements were composed of Germans of various religious faiths including Catholics, Lutherans, Moravians, Evangelical United Brethren, Reformed, and Baptists.

The settlements were given encouragement and aid by government officials, the press and the Canadian Pacific.<sup>2</sup> The Medicine Hat immigration agent reported that the Germans in the area were a "superior class" and H.H. Smith, western Canada's immigration agent, described the Germans as an "excellent type of immigrant, sober, capable and industrious; quiet and law abiding, possessed of a fair elementary education and only wanting the opportunity denied them heretofore to prove themselves creditable citizens."<sup>3</sup> The Calgary Herald wrote that the Moravian Brethren, who were concentrated at Bruderheim, were "an intelligent lot of people and being good

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<sup>1</sup>D.I., 1892, p.7, S.P. #13.

<sup>2</sup>John E. Herzer, Homesteading for God, (Edmonton, 1946).  
M.H.T., Jan. 16, March 20, July 24, 1890. L.N., April 24, 1890.  
C.H., June 26, 1889.

<sup>3</sup>D.I., 1892, p.8, S.P. #13.



farmers are most desirable settlers".<sup>1</sup> The fact that despite the arrival of numbers of Germans and Scandinavians in central Alberta, English speaking settlers still formed the majority of settlers in the area, also meant that a hostile reaction toward these immigrants was less likely to develop.<sup>2</sup>

The opposition which developed to a small group of German Jews who arrived from the U.S. in 1893 was not then because of their German background. Since other settlers who came to western Canada lacked farming experience, the opposition was probably on grounds other than the repeated assertion in the press that they were not wanted since they could not farm successfully.<sup>3</sup> The belief that they could not farm was part of the stereotype of the Jew as middleman; they were not used to physical labor of any kind. Frank Oliver argued that the country had no time or money to spend on the "philanthropic effort of turning thousands of Jew pedlars into industrious and prosperous farmers." It would be better not to have settlers than to have Jews, "anarchists, morally, socially, and politically." Reported incidents including the selling of their farm implements and a court case rising out of theft within the group reinforced the stereotype of the avaricious Jew.<sup>4</sup> A delegation which included the mayors

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<sup>1</sup>C.H. April 27, 1894.

<sup>2</sup>In 1896, the travelling agent in Alberta reported the arrival of 652 families from the U.S., 303 from Canada, 99 from the British Isles, and 325 from Europe. (A.S. Morton, History of Prairie Settlement (Toronto: 1938) p. 99.)

<sup>3</sup>M.G., June 23, 1893. C.H., July 5, 1893. E.B., July 3, 1893.

<sup>4</sup>For another example of this stereotype, see M.G., Dec. 23, 1898.





of Edmonton, Calgary, and Lethbridge along with Alberta's member of Parliament met with the immigration agent in Winnipeg to protest the arrival of this "most undesirable class of settlers".<sup>1</sup>

### MORMONS

The limits of tolerance in Alberta are strikingly revealed by contrasting the favorable reception accorded Mennonites, Scandinavians, and Germans with the opposition which developed to the arrival of polygamous Mormons in the south-west corner of the Northwest Territories in 1887. Plural marriage appeared to threaten the whole system of monogamy which was a basic Canadian cultural value. While there was no fear that polygamy might spread, there could be no compromise with such a deviant social practice. But the government encouraged the Mormons' settlement, as long as they did not bring more than one wife, since they were considered to be good farmers.

The Mormons in Alberta first came to the southern part of the province from Utah as fugitives from anti-polygamy laws.<sup>2</sup> Some of the men who were being pursued escaped arrest by crossing the border into western Canada.

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., July 10, 1893.

<sup>2</sup>On the early history of the Mormons in Alberta see Lowry Nelson, "The Mormon Settlements in Alberta", in Group Settlement ed. by C.A. Dawson (Toronto: 1936); M.S. Tagg, "A History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Canada, 1830-1963", (unpublished Ph.D. Brigham Young University, 1963); and Lawrence B. Lee, "The Mormons Come to Canada, 1887-1902", Pacific Northwest Quarterly, January 1968, pp.11-22.



In 1886, Charles O. Card, a church leader in Cache Valley and a polygamist, was directed by the president of the church, John Taylor, to go north to Canada to find "peace and asylum". This instruction was partially based on the fact that Taylor was of British birth and had lived in Canada where he felt Card's group would receive "British justice".

Card, along with twelve exiled families whom he had recruited, left for the north in March, 1887, and settled at Lee's Creek, south of Fort Macleod, where they immediately began the work of community building. The settlers called their new home Cardston.

The initial favorable reception by government officials and the North West Mounted Police foreshadowed the continuing praise given the Mormons by government officials. In December, 1887, the collector of customs at Fort Macleod reported that the Mormons "make first class settlers and are industrious, zealous and well behaved."<sup>1</sup> William Pearce, the Superintendent of Mines for the Dominion and promoter of immigration in the northwest, cited the fire-fighting organization of the Mormons as a model for other communities and pointed out that these settlers had valuable irrigation experience. He also deprecated the critical articles which appeared in the Canadian press about the establishment of the Mormon colony.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>N.Y. Times, Dec. 16, 1887.

<sup>2</sup>D.I., 1890, p. 13, S.P. #17.



J. S. Dennis of the Department of the Interior visited the settlement in 1888 and was favorably impressed:

Any person visiting the colony cannot help being struck with the wonderful progress made by them during the short time they have been in the country. And I may say that I have never seen any new settlement where so much has been accomplished in the same length of time. I am satisfied that they are an exceedingly industrious and intelligent people who thoroughly understand prairie farming. 1

He also warned, however, against encouraging their settlement in large numbers; they were fugitives from justice, they believed in polygamy, and they had a tendency to become intolerant as soon as they became a majority.<sup>2</sup> Land surveyors visiting the area were impressed with the energy of the colonists, and reported that the Mormons were "singularly economical, ingenious, and progressive..."<sup>3</sup> The Mounted Police also formed a "favorable opinion" of the Mormons. By their good conduct, they had "won for themselves the reputation of being law abiding, industrious settlers."<sup>4</sup> One of the reasons for this was accurately noted: they felt themselves on probation.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>L.N., March 29, 1888.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>D.I., 1892, S.P. #13, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup>N.W.M.P. Reports 1896, S.P. #15, p.46; N.W.M.P. Reports 1893, S.P. #15, p. 36.

<sup>5</sup>N.W.M.P. Reports, 1893, S.P. #15, p. 36. This favorable assessment by N.W.M.P. changed little: (N.W.M.P. Reports, 1902, S.P. #28, p. 82.)



The favorable attitudes of the government officials contrasted sharply with the hostile reaction to the Mormons in both the eastern and western papers (including the Edmonton Bulletin, Saskatchewan Herald, and Calgary Herald), who opposed Mormon entry because of their belief in polygamy.<sup>1</sup> The long conflict between the U.S. government and the Mormons was known to Canadians and served to prejudice opinion towards the Mormons who were cast in the role of defiers of the authority of the state because of their resistance to the laws banning polygamy. The Bulletin conceded that the Mormons were "sober, industrious and thrifty" and that their experience with agriculture fitted them for an area of scanty rain fall, but Frank Oliver, the editor of the newspaper, opposed their entry because of their belief in polygamy and defiance of American law.

[They] belong to a sect in comparison with whose belief that of the Mahometan of Soudan or of the Thugs of India is light and liberty. Their polygamy to which such strong objections are raised is one of the milder manifestations of their principles. In so much as their numbers are increased by so much is the welfare of society and the safety of the state endangered. Mormonism is as essentially a treason as a religion. <sup>2</sup>

Their religion was a "conspiracy against society" and a

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<sup>1</sup>The Medicine Hat Times remained neutral provided the Mormons did not attempt to continue the practice of polygamy. (M.H.T. August 20, 1887) Later (January 19, 1890), the M.H.T. carried an editorial by Goldwin Smith expressing opposition to Mormon immigration.

<sup>2</sup>E.B., Sept. 3, 1887.





"treason against constituted authority." They would, however, be welcomed if they would "sink their Mormonism in their citizenship" and become assimilated.<sup>1</sup> While emphasizing the importance of religious toleration, Oliver argued that no country could allow treason or "social abominations" to spread.<sup>2</sup>

Newspapers in the Cardston area were more favorable in their assessment of the Mormons. The Lethbridge News defended the Mormons against the Bulletin allegations noting that only a few Mormons had ever practiced polygamy, so all Mormons could not be condemned, and arguing that the Mormons had no desire to continue polygamy in Alberta. In any case, it was almost inconceivable that the Mormons could attain such proportions as would enable them to affect the laws of the territories and fears that Mormonism posed a threat to Christianity could not be taken seriously. They were, according to the News, "intelligent, industrious and frugal; indeed, in these respects, they are not excelled by any class of settlers."<sup>3</sup> If the Chinese and Jews could be allowed in, there should be no reason to object to Mormons.

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., Oct. 8, 1887.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid

<sup>3</sup>L.N., May 31, 1888.



Fears about the introduction of polygamy were further aroused by the defence of polygamy by Cardston's postmaster, A.M. Stenhouse, a former member of the legislature in British Columbia and a convert to Mormonism. Stenhouse argued in the press that since Canada had no law which prohibited plural marriage, polygamy should be accepted in Canada. He also defended polygamy on the grounds that it provided for a division of labor, and it would perpetuate the fittest.<sup>1</sup> These arguments further alienated those who had objected to the Mormons' entry because of their belief in polygamy.<sup>2</sup> The Calgary Herald expressed a common reaction:

The Mormons may depend upon one thing--they are not welcome in Canada. A class of persons who cannot live under the tolerant laws of the United States are not desirable citizens of any country. And Mr. Stenhouse's effusions are not convincing Canadians that the Mormons intend to live in harmony with the laws of this country. 3

Despite evidence of hostility throughout the Dominion the Canadian Mormons believed the government welcomed Mormon immigration, and thus might be willing to grant special concessions. A delegation composed of two apostles, Francis M. Lyman and John W. Taylor, along with Charles O. Card, went to Ottawa to ask for special concessions

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<sup>1</sup>L.N., Dec. 26, 1888; August 13, 1890.

<sup>2</sup>Saskatchewan Herald, Feb. 26, 1890; Dec. 11, 1889; July 24, 1890. M.G., Jan. 10, 1889. L.N., Dec. 12, 1888, Dec. 26, 1888.

<sup>3</sup>C.H., Dec. 18, 1889.



with respect to the use of natural resources, certain customs immunities, a "hamlet grant" as authorized by the Dominion Land Act, and the privilege of bringing "plural families" to Canada.<sup>1</sup> The group travelled to Winnipeg where W.B. Scarth, M.P., gave them a letter of introduction which stated that they were "intelligent men" and that the Mormons would make "better settlers than I have seen anywhere in the north-west."<sup>2</sup> Scarth told the delegation that he was not very hopeful that the Saints would realize their requests, since it would be politically disastrous for the government to grant them.<sup>3</sup>

The delegation's attempts to clarify the Mormons' position brought an avalanche of criticism from the press. The Lethbridge News began to advocate the necessity of assimilating Mormons,<sup>4</sup> asserting that the Mormons' request to bring their plural wives to Canada "revealed (them) before the public in the hideous aspect of polygamists, and apparently proud of what Canadians consider their shame."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>They did not want a law to legalize plural marriage. For the full text of the petition, see Dawson, Group Settlement, p. 203.

<sup>2</sup>Public Archives of Canada, Macdonald Papers, Nov. 6, 1888, Scarth to Macdonald #119553-119555. Another letter to Macdonald stated that he had been pleased with the "neatness, thrift and industry" of the Lee's Creek settlement which he had visited. (Ibid., Nov. 5, 1888, #119555-119556.)

<sup>3</sup>Charles O. Card, Personal Journal, Nov. 4, 1888, quoted in Tagg, "Mormon Church", p. 139.

<sup>4</sup>L.N., Nov. 14, 1888.

<sup>5</sup>L.N., Dec. 12, 1888.



But the Gazette defended the Mormons, arguing that since they were not practicing polygamy they should not be interfered with.<sup>1</sup>

On November 16, 1888, the Cabinet met and decided that the only thing the government could grant was the half section of land to Card as trustee for the townsite. The Cabinet decided against the request to allow them to bring in plural wives. Mackenzie Bowell, one of Macdonald's cabinet ministers, explained, "it was not proper, and very unpopular, and consequently could not be admitted."<sup>2</sup>

Government officials kept a vigilant eye on the Mormons to make sure they did not violate their promises concerning the practice of polygamy. Bowell visited Cardston in the fall of 1889 to gather first-hand information. He expressed satisfaction with everything he saw, and felt confident that polygamy was not being practiced.<sup>3</sup> Card assured Burgess, the Deputy Minister of the Interior, that the Mormons were keeping their promises.<sup>4</sup> The News worried that Bowell's friendliness toward the Mormons might presage

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<sup>1</sup>M.G., Dec. 20, 1888; Oct. 31, 1889.

<sup>2</sup>Charles O. Card, Personal Journal, Nov. 13, 1888, quoted in Tagg, "Mormon Church", p. 144.

<sup>3</sup>Copy of Ottawa articles in Deseret Evening News, Dec. 2 and 14, 1889.

<sup>4</sup>For full letter, see C.O. Card, Personal Journal, Feb. 22, 1890, quoted in Tagg, "Mormon Church", p. 149.





the government's approval of some of the Mormon requests.<sup>1</sup>

The knowledge that the Mormons had come to Canada to escape anti-polygamy laws reinforced fears that Mormons were practicing polygamy. Would they undergo the privations of re-settlement if they were not going to re-establish the practice?<sup>2</sup> The Calgary Herald commended the eastern press's opposition to Mormon immigration.<sup>3</sup> "We incline to the opinion that the Parliament and Government of Canada will arrest the Mormonizing of [southern Alberta] before the mischief gets beyond their control."<sup>4</sup>

Fears that polygamy was being practiced led to the introduction of a bill in the House of Commons in April, 1890 to prohibit polygamy.<sup>5</sup> Sir John Thompson, the Minister of Justice explained that section 8 of the bill was intended to extend the prohibition of bigamy by making a second marriage punishable, whether it took place in Canada or elsewhere, while Section 9 prohibited polygamy and made violation of the law punishable by five years in prison and a fine of \$500.

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<sup>1</sup>L.N., Oct. 30, 1889, ed. "Mormon Aggression".

<sup>2</sup>For an example of this line of reasoning see E.B., Dec. 21, 1889. The Bulletin argued that unless a law were passed soon to prohibit polygamy, the whole of Utah might move to Canada.

<sup>3</sup>C.H., Jan. 15, 1890.

<sup>4</sup>See also C.H., Feb. 19, 1890, and March 19, 1890, where anti-Mormon letters described the Mountain Meadows massacre. There were other grievances besides polygamy. Fears were expressed that the Mormons, like the Chinese, provided unfair economic competition, and that they threatened democratic processes since their vote was controlled. (C.H., Jan. 15, 1890.)

<sup>5</sup>Bill 65, Section 9. A similar bill introduced in the Senate by Senator Macdonald had been withdrawn. S.H., March 5, 1890.



The opposition also approved the bill. Edward Blake argued that the theocratic notions<sup>1</sup> of the Mormons were as dangerous as their belief in polygamy and criticized the government for "inducing" them to come. Prime Minister Macdonald replied that they had been allowed to enter under the stipulation that they not practice polygamy and Dewdney denied that they had been induced to come.<sup>2</sup> The bill was passed.

The statute effectively silenced the question as far as the majority of Canadian Mormons were concerned, but charges that Mormons were still practicing polygamy continued until the 1920's . The possibility of establishing polygamy among Mormons in Alberta received a further blow in 1890 with the announcement by the President of the Mormon Church, Wilford Woodruff, (following a Supreme Court decision that upheld the legality of the anti-polygamy laws in the United States) that polygamy would no longer be practiced. Government officials were satisfied that polygamy had ceased; western Canada's immigration agent wrote: "The abandonment of the special tenet of their faith which regards polygamy as a desirable social condition has left the Mormon apparently without any distinguishing feature to which the rest of the Christian world can reasonably object."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>On Mormon theocratic political beliefs as a cause of Mormon-gentile conflict see Klaus Hansen, Quest for Empire (East Lansing, Michigan, 1967).

<sup>2</sup>See Canada, Parliament, House of Commons Debates, April 10, 1890, c. 3172-3180.

<sup>3</sup>D.I. 1892, S.P. #13, p. 6.



Although there were no arrests for polygamy, the issue continued in some circles since it was easy to conjure up strange stories about a culturally deviant and clannish group like the Mormons. The continued influx of Mormons from Utah and Idaho, who came seeking economic opportunities, also caused concern, and fears grew that Mormons were trying to take over the region economically and politically. The Lethbridge News charged that Mormons were encouraging the Blood Indians to practice polygamy,<sup>2</sup> and vaguely warned that since Mormons were growing in strength, "some definite action should be taken at an early date."<sup>3</sup> The Calgary Herald urged politicians to investigate polygamy among the Mormons:

Through the supineness of our public men we are preparing trouble for our country, for as surely as the United States had the most serious difficulties to encounter in dealing with the most infamous conspiracy of modern times against morals and loyalty to a nation, so surely we will in Canada. . . be obliged to deal with the same dangerous element. . . we hope the Protestants of Alberta will be found joining hands [with the Roman Catholics] in an Anti-Mormon Movement which will arrest the Mormon scheme of over-running and taking possession of southern Alberta. 4

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<sup>1</sup>By 1894 there were 674 people in the Cardston ward (an ecclesiastical unit similar to a parish).

<sup>2</sup>L.N., August 13, 1890.

<sup>3</sup>L.N., September 10, 1890.

<sup>4</sup>C.H., August 6, 1890. The arguments used to oppose the entry of Mormons bear a striking resemblance to those used to oppose Hutterites at a later date.



Hostility toward Mormons was further aroused with the announcement of a Mormon application to the Lieutenant Governor of the Northwest Territories for incorporation of a proposed co-operative store as a joint stock company. Macleod residents held a public meeting to protest--they saw the application as another evidence of Mormon boldness and growing Mormon power.<sup>1</sup> A petition was drawn up to protest the request for the charter:

These people are not advantageous settlers for any country and will be a detriment to this country, and that they should not be encouraged in any way by government act, or allowed to form themselves into a more corporate political and religious unit than they are now. 2

The petition also objected that the charter would enable them to acquire large bodies of land, thus giving them power to make it impossible for people not of their faith to acquire land. The petition cited the attempts by the American government to destroy the economic power of Utah Mormons and warned that Mormon economic power would lead to control over civil affairs. Protesters circulated the petition in Pincher Creek, Macleod and Lethbridge and received the support of the Alberta press.<sup>3</sup>

The Mormons' request passed the territorial legislative assembly, but the Lieutenant Governor refused to sign

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<sup>1</sup>On opposition to Mormon cooperative beliefs and practices as a cause of "Mormon-Gentile" conflict, see Leonard Arrington, Great Basin Kingdom (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1966).

<sup>2</sup>L.N., August 20, 1890.

<sup>3</sup>L.N., July 23, 1890; Medicine Hat Times, August 24, 1890; E.B., August 30, 1890; C.H., August 6, 1890.





"until the matter had been referred to the federal authorities in Ottawa."<sup>1</sup> In January, 1891, Card was able to enlist the support of Sir A.T. Galt who was interested in the development of southern Alberta and F.W.G. Haultain, a member of the executive committee of the North West Territories and lawyer for the Mormons, who helped obtain the charter.<sup>2</sup> The Mormons' abandonment of polygamy and their agricultural contributions eased tensions so that the response to the Mormons who arrived in 1898 and 1899 to work on an irrigation system in southern Alberta was not as hostile as the initial reaction to Card's group.

#### CENTRAL EUROPEANS

While few in number, the Hungarian and Slavic miners who had come to work in the mines in Alberta, attracted some attention and probably provoked even more hostility than the Mormons encountered. The first Hungarians in the Medicine Hat area arrived from the Hungarian settlement in Saskatchewan known as Esterhazy. Work had been scarce and the town had been destroyed by a prairie fire, so the leader of the settlement, Count Esterhazy, arranged for the Hungarian and Slovak miners who had arrived from Pennsylvania to work in a coal mine near Medicine Hat. After a short period, the men felt

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<sup>1</sup>Charles O. Card, Personal Journal, June 15-19, 1890, quoted in Tagg, "Mormon Church", p. 161.

<sup>2</sup>Tagg, "Mormon Church", p. 163



that the company was mistreating them, so they left the mines. The mine owners and local paper charged that there seemed to be strong socialistic elements among the miners, and considered them undesirable.<sup>1</sup>

Hostility toward Hungarian and Slav miners in Lethbridge was aroused by violence, intemperance, Sabbath breaking and the low status of immigrant women. The News described one incident involving miners who came into conflict with the law, concluding that the immigrants were undesirable:<sup>2</sup>

"For some time past we have had in our midst a large colony of Slavs and Hungarians. Although it has from the first been evident that they were not the proper class of men to assist in building up a new country, so long as they conformed to our laws and behaved quietly and respectably we had no right to complain of them as immigrants. But during the last few months complaints have frequently been made by citizens having the misfortune to live in their neighborhood, of the great disturbance to them caused by the drunken orgies and unseemly conduct of the people of these races. Sunday, a day which is more especially regarded in a Christian community as a day of peace and quietness, being a holiday, appears to be the day which the Slavs and Hungarians in this place more especially mark by revelry and riotous conduct. But the discontent which has been so long smouldering has at last broken out into a blaze, fanned by the brutal conduct of these people last Sunday evening. Not content with disgusting their neighbors with the drunken orgies continued throughout the day, in the evening a crowd of these uncivilized beings stood around to witness a fight between two of their number, and when a constable interferes to separate and arrest the offenders, the mob interfere, maltreat the constable and rescue his

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<sup>1</sup>Canada Parliament, 1887, Sessional Papers #12, p.85; M.H.T., Dec. 25, 1886.

<sup>2</sup>L.N., June 28, 1888.



prisoners and when the constable calls for assistance this horde of savages with axes, picks and knives attempt to resist and obstruct the execution of our laws. As it is two policemen and one civilian have been severely injured whilst several others were hurt by blows from bottles, chairs and other blunt instruments. Such conduct as this cannot be tolerated. This event has, however, not been without its lesson. It has shown clearly that the existence of such a degraded class cannot be tolerated in a civilized community. If they cannot yield obedience to our laws and conform to our institutions the Hungarians and Slavs must go. As a race they are probably the most despicable that have yet found their way to Canada. Uncivilized and degraded in their habits, they might aptly be summed up, 'manners they have none, and their habits are beastly'.

Other incidents, including a free fight in the Hungarian part of the town in which windows of a house were smashed, doors broken, skulls cracked and one man stabbed,<sup>1</sup> and knife fights between Slavs and Hungarians reinforced the notions of undesirability of eastern and southern Europeans.<sup>2</sup> The Mounted Police reported: "The Hungarians and Slavs are not a very desirable element",<sup>3</sup> and the police were not unhappy to see many of them leave when the mines were closed in 1895.

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<sup>1</sup>L.N., Feb. 20, 1891; L.N., Feb. 17, 1892, and N.W.M.P. Reports, S.P.#15, 1894, p. 91.

<sup>2</sup>Slav and Hungarian weddings were often occasions for violence. (L.N., Aug. 28, 1895.)

<sup>3</sup> N.W.M.P. Reports, 1894, S.P. #15, p. 91



The stereotype of the unruly Slav continued after 1896 and was eventually extended to include all foreigners. But there was usually no anxious nativism involved in this stereotype during the period before 1896, or fear that British law might be undermined.

### ASSIMILATION

The predominant ideology expressed by Albertans who asked themselves how immigrants would fit into the society was that of Anglo-conformity--assimilation of immigrants<sup>1</sup> and French-Canadians to a British-Canadian norm. The newspapers argued that no special privileges should be allowed groups like Mennonites or Mormons, since this would prevent the formation of a homogeneous (i.e. British) nationality.<sup>2</sup> The Lethbridge News stated a common belief: "We do not want to see one portion of Canada Icelandic, another Hungarian and another Mormon."<sup>3</sup>

Exceptions were usually not made for French Canadians. Indeed, one of the main arguments against giving the French Canadians special language rights or separate schools was that similar rights would have to be given to other nationalities and religions, thus preventing the

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<sup>1</sup>The Chinese were thought of as immigrants in a different sense. There was very little feeling that they could be or should be assimilated.

<sup>2</sup>E.B., Oct. 8, 1887; L.N., Aug. 21, 1889, Aug. 20, 1890, June 28, 1888; C.H., Jan. 15, 1890.

<sup>3</sup>L.N., Nov. 14, 1888.





formation of a homogeneous nationality.<sup>1</sup> The Alberta press supported attempts by D'Alton McCarthy to expunge the dual language system which made English and French official languages in the Northwest Territories, but denied that they were motivated by anti-French or anti-Catholic sentiment.<sup>2</sup> McCarthy declared on his trip to the Northwest in the fall of 1889, "this is a British country, and the sooner we take up our French-Canadians and make them British the less trouble we will leave for posterity". The News argued that dual languages prevented the various nationalities from blending into one "race"; If the French were to receive language rights, why not Norwegians, Germans, Icelanders, and Hungarians?"<sup>3</sup>

In October 1889, the Territorial Legislative Assembly took up the language issue. H. Cayley (Calgary) and Thomas Tweed (Medicine Hat) introduced a resolution to establish a committee to draft a petition requesting the federal government to repeal section 110 of the territorial act which made English and French official languages and provided for the printing of proceedings and papers in both languages. It

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<sup>1</sup>L.N., Feb. 15, July 17, Aug. 21, 1889; Nov. 14, 1888; E.B., April 20, 1889, Sept. 14, 1889; M.G., May 8, 1889.

<sup>2</sup>C.H., March 6, 1889; L.N., Feb. 1, 1889; E.B., Aug. 10, 1889, Sept. 14, 1889.

<sup>3</sup>L.N., June 26, Aug. 4, 1889; Jan. 29, 1889.



would appear that the motivation behind the resolution was an attempt to see the non-English element anglicized, although financial reasons were often given as the rationale. The resolution passed, supported with speeches by Cayley, Haultain and Oliver.

D'Alton McCarthy's bill in the House of Commons to repeal the language clause was supported by Alberta's member D.W. Davis (from Macleod), the press, and by a large number of petitions.<sup>1</sup> Parliament decided to give the Territorial Assembly the right to decide the language of the proceedings, but refused to change the separate school provision. When the Territorial legislature met, Haultain introduced a measure to have the proceedings published in English, and this passed.<sup>2</sup>

Alberta's members of the territorial legislature also supported the 1892 bill which demanded that all schools be taught in English in order to unify the country, but provision was made to permit a primary course in French.

The opposition which developed to separate schools was not motivated solely by the desire for homogeneity in the west. Orangemen, who were overtly anti-Catholic, feared the political power of Catholics, while others like Frank Oliver

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<sup>1</sup>See ed., C.H., Feb. 1 and 7, 1890; L.N., Jan. 20, Feb. 12, 1890; M.G., Feb. 13, 1890.

<sup>2</sup>Keith Macleod, "Politics, Schools, and the French Language", in N. Ward and D. Spafford, Politics in Saskatchewan (Lindsay, Ontario), p. 126.



disliked separate schools out of anti-clerical convictions.<sup>1</sup> Opposition to separate schools was also connected with the struggle for local autonomy in the Northwest Territories since the 1875 school legislation which set up a dual Catholic and Protestant school system was passed without representation from the west. Slowly the territorial legislature introduced changes which diminished the strict duality based on religion. Despite appeals by the Catholic hierarchy, the federal government generally refused to intervene since it was unwilling to trample on what westerners felt were territorial rights in determining educational policy, although the federal government refused to repeal the separate school clause.<sup>2</sup>

#### CHINESE

Anti-Mormon and anti-European sentiment did not approach the level of hostility which characterized anti-Chinese agitation in Canada and in Alberta. The Chinese were rated as the most undesirable immigrants because they were the group most conspicuously remote in culture and "race". Fears arose that either unlike European immigrants they could not be assimilated, or that if they were assimilated, they might undermine Christian ethics, religion and progress. Despite this hostility, Chinese were not excluded from Canada since powerful groups believed that their labor was economically indispensable.

In 1881 work commenced on the Canadian Pacific Railway and to fill the labor demand the Canadian government granted permission to the Onderdonk Construction Company to

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., Dec. 4, 1893.

<sup>2</sup>Lupul, "Relations", p. 233. See also E.B., Feb. 15, 1890.



bring in 17,000 Chinese workers from the southern Chinese province of Kwantung. Poverty and over-population in China made the Canadian offer look attractive. Expecting to return to their homeland, they made no attempt to learn Canadian customs. They wore Chinese clothes and preserved the long queue of hair which signified submission to the Manchu dynasty. Living in seclusion and eating "strange" food, they made little effort to make friends among the local population--their inability to speak English made such associations difficult. This behaviour aroused both curiosity and suspicion which eventually developed into resentment stemming from economic competition.

The completion of the railway in November, 1885 threw large numbers of Chinese out of work. Some returned to China or went to the United States, while others began to move into the prairie provinces and eastern Canada, but the majority remained in British Columbia.

To find work the Chinese were forced to accept low wages, thus keeping wages of white workers down and provoking intense anti-Chinese hostility on the part of labor. Chinese immigration became an annual issue in British Columbia's legislature. The British Columbia government and organized labor charged the Chinese with driving white laborers away, with introducing loathsome diseases and demoralizing habits, and evading punishment of crime and payment of taxes.<sup>1</sup> Labor opposed the use of Oriental strike breakers and blamed the

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<sup>1</sup>Tien-Fang Cheng, Oriental Immigration in Canada, (Shanghai, 1931), p. 47.





Chinese for poor safety in the mines because of their inability to read safety regulations and their readiness to work under unsafe conditions. The Trades and Labor Congress of Canada incorporated into its platform the principle of exclusion of all Chinese.

The British Columbia legislature passed laws to restrict Chinese immigration but the federal government disallowed these laws. Prime Minister Macdonald was reluctant to pass federal legislation prohibiting Chinese entry since he felt the Chinese were necessary to provide an adequate labor supply and he feared that such legislation would impede the initiation of trade between China and Canada. But after the report of a royal commission to look into the Chinese question, the government passed an anti-Chinese law which levied a head tax of \$50 on every Chinese immigrant entering Canada and limited the number of Chinese allowed to enter Canada.<sup>1</sup>

Opposition to the Chinese in Alberta took on different forms and was not as virulent as it was in British Columbia since there were few Chinese and they did not compete directly with white laborers. By 1891, there were only 31 Chinese in the provisional district of Alberta.<sup>2</sup> In a frontier society where women were always in a distinct minority, the Chinese engaged in various types of domestic service, principally

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<sup>1</sup> Statutes of Canada, 1885, Chapter 71.

<sup>2</sup> Census of Canada, 1891, p. 362. There were Chinese in Lethbridge by 1885, in Medicine Hat by 1887 and Edmonton by 1889. (M.G., Sept. 8, 1885; M.H.T. May 7, 1887.)



cooking and washing, which meant that many Chinese were often appreciated for the work they did.

Albertans sympathized with anti-Oriental sentiment in B.C.<sup>1</sup> but regarded restrictive legislation as contrary to imperial obligations. The Calgary Herald argued that since Canadians were admitted into Chinese ports the Chinese must be admitted into Canadian harbors. The problem could be resolved, according to the Herald, through constitutional means - if Chinese help and labor were boycotted, the Chinese would soon leave.<sup>2</sup>

The first influx of Chinese through Calgary, however small, aroused both curiosity and anxiety: commenting on the passage of twelve laundrymen through Calgary the Herald cringed: "the insidious almond eyed gentlemen from the walled empire continue to work themselves into Canada."<sup>3</sup> But the Medicine Hat Times<sup>4</sup> observed that the establishment by Chinese of canning factories and rice mills on the coast would come as a "surprise and a shock to some preconceptions of the Caucasian," and the public hostility which was expressed toward the Chinese before 1892 was usually not as violent as the sentiments of a

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<sup>1</sup>C.H., March 5, 1885.

<sup>2</sup>C.H., ed. Feb. 26, 1885.

<sup>3</sup>C.H., June 13, 1888.

<sup>4</sup>Sept. 17, 1891.



writer in the Medicine Hat Times who urged that the town's Chinaman be treated as a "mad dog" and thrown in the river.<sup>1</sup>

Hostility towards the Chinese in Alberta was greatly aggravated by the threat of a small-pox epidemic in Calgary, allegedly being spread by Chinese, and eventually resulted in an anti-Chinese riot. In July, 1892, Calgary health officials discovered that a Chinese laundryman from the coast had smallpox. Several other cases were reported among Chinese in the neighboring houses and among laundry patrons. City officials burned the laundry and its contents and quarantined the victims.

Passions against the Chinese were further aroused by the visit of Locksley Lucas, the secretary of the Anti-Chinese League on the west coast. At a large anti-Chinese meeting Lucas described the method of boycotting the Chinese to compel them to seek new fields of labor; Vancouver had prohibited employment of Chinese by the city and many labor unions had agreed to boycott any establishment where Chinese labor was employed. Lucas gave innumerable reasons to justify his opposition to the Chinese, emphasizing alleged lurid sexual and scatological practices among the Chinese. He also charged that the Chinese were "deficient in the quality of comradeship" and that they had a high crime rate<sup>2</sup>, while their

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<sup>1</sup>M.H.T., May 7, 1887.

<sup>2</sup>Statistics of the 1902 Royal Commission show that this was a false allegation.



practice of gambling caused the "downfall" of many young white men. But the most serious of all their crimes was the lust of the Chinamen, and Lucas proceeded "with great minuteness" to lay bare "the methods followed by the procurers - once under the influence of drugs, white girls became slaves of the Chinamen." At the end of the meeting, Calgary's Mayor organized a branch of the anti-Chinese League in Calgary.<sup>1</sup>

Soon after the meeting, the Mounted Police informed the mayor of rumors that the Chinamen, when released from quarantine, were to be driven from town, but the mayor left town without acting on the information. After the release of the men on the evening of August 2, about three hundred men<sup>2</sup> attacked the Chinese laundries. One of the laundries was badly wrecked and three other laundries were also "visited" and some Chinamen were "roughed up." The lack of protest among the Chinese not only made the attack possible, but probably even increased anti-Chinese feeling since aggressiveness was a highly valued frontier virtue. The town policemen did not appear during the early stages of the riot and the Mounted Police lacked jurisdiction to act. Eventually the town police arrived, and after a few arrests the crowd dispersed.

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<sup>1</sup>C.H., August 17, 1892.

<sup>2</sup>L.N., August 10, 1892; C.H., August 3, 1892.





Some Chinese sought refuge in the police barracks, while others fled over the prairie.<sup>1</sup> For several nights, Calgary's Chinese stayed in the police barracks, but eventually the town authorities asked the Mounted Police to provide protection for the Chinese. After three weeks the police patrol was withdrawn.<sup>2</sup>

While the clergy condemned the riot,<sup>3</sup> the newspapers generally expressed sympathy with the motives of the rioters. One dissenter, the Times, condemned the rioters and expressed fears that the riot would discourage settlement by leaving the impression that the west was not law-abiding.<sup>4</sup> The Edmonton Bulletin wanted Canada to bar the Chinese.<sup>5</sup> They did more harm than good in the country, according to the editorial, and the disturbance had shown the real feelings of Calgarians towards them. Oliver rationalized that while Christian charity was a binding law, the law of self-preservation superseded it:

The contention that the laws of Christian charity bind the people of this country to furnish asylum, sympathy, or support to any

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., August 11, 1892.

<sup>2</sup>N.W.M.P. Reports, 1893, S.P. #15, p. 36.

<sup>3</sup>E.B., August 8, 1892. The Protestant clergy were among the few who defended the Chinese in the U.S. and in Canada, praising their thrift and docility. They also hoped that the Chinese could be converted to Christianity. W.L. Grant, Principal Grant (Toronto, 1904), p. 370.

<sup>4</sup>M.H.T., August 11, 1892.

<sup>5</sup>E.B., August 8, 1892.



number or kind of foreign heathen who may choose to engage in the distribution of opium, leprosy, small pox and diabolism generally in their [the Chinese] midst, in the humble opinion of this journal is to put a somewhat strained interpretation upon...those laws.

Since the existing laws did not contemplate having to deal with such people, it was reasonable that the public deal with these extraordinary situations as they arose. To excuse the conduct of the Chinese on the grounds that they were ignorant and uncivilized was, in the Bulletin's view, ridiculous since the Chinese would be the last to admit inferiority. Chinese standards were different, but they would have to conform to Canadian standards.<sup>1</sup>

Resentment against the Chinese in Edmonton was aroused through the accidental burning of a stable by a Chinese laundryman who had thrown out hot ashes, but no violence resulted.<sup>2</sup> Thus, while there were few Chinese in Alberta before 1896, a whole set of negative stereotypes toward the Chinese had developed and were later used in the opposition which was expressed to the Chinese who came into Alberta in larger numbers after the turn of the century.

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., August 15, 1892.

<sup>2</sup>E.B., March 25, 1893.



INTRODUCTION

With the rapid increase in the number of immigrants coming to western Canada after 1896 under the new Liberal government, nativism experienced a significant upsurge. Native Canadians expressed fears that illiterate peasants from central, southern, and eastern Europe<sup>1</sup> would undermine "Anglo-Saxon" political institutions and Canada's social integration. The newspaper editors, politicians, educators, clergy, social workers, and labor leaders who discussed immigration centered their attention on two main issues: immigration restriction, and assimilation. These two issues were intimately tied together since Canadians believed that the question of how many immigrants should be allowed into the country was dependent on the question of how many could be assimilated.

Immigration Policy

Immigration to Canada had increased rapidly after 1896 as favorable economic circumstances in Canada corresponded with active immigration promotion by the Canadian government. Laurier's Minister of the Interior, Clifford Sifton, was dedicated to the task of filling up the Canadian west and hoped that bloc settlements could be formed in western Canada, similar to the Scandinavian settlements in Minnesota

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<sup>1</sup>In the United States, since these immigrants were considerably different from the northern Europeans who predominated before 1880, this wave of immigration was referred to as the "new immigration". Although this phrase had some currency with eastern intellectuals, Albertans did not employ it.



and Wisconsin which would serve as magnets for further immigration. Sifton prepared the way for settlement by abolishing the land grant system, through which speculators and colonization companies had tied up much of the best land, by simplifying the process of securing homesteads, and by forming an organization to administer his policy.

Although people from Ontario and the Maritimes continued to migrate into western Canada, the Liberal government also saw the necessity of attracting agricultural immigrants from abroad.<sup>1</sup> The government advertised the west in Great Britain, the U.S. and in Europe, and gave bonuses to steamship companies which secured immigrants. The Laurier government also contracted with the North Atlantic Trading Company to act as Canada's exclusive immigration agent in Europe. The immigration policy as developed by Sifton was clearly that of attracting agricultural immigrants, whatever their nationality. As J.A. Smart, the Deputy Minister of the Interior asserted:

If the settler is one who has been engaged in agricultural pursuits in the old land, is possessed of his full faculties, steady, honest, sober, and willing to work whether he be rich or poor, Galician, Austrian, Russian, Swede, Belgian or French, we believe it most desirable to encourage him to occupy our land and to break up our soil and assist in developing the resources of the country, and in this way enrich himself and Canada. 2

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<sup>1</sup>On Canada's immigration policy during this period see Norman Macdonald, Canada: Immigration and Colonization (1841-1903 (Toronto: 1967).

<sup>2</sup>Canada Parliament, House of Commons, Journals, 1900, p. 317.





None but agriculturalists should be encouraged to come.<sup>1</sup>

Sifton recognized that Canadians would prefer to settle the west with British immigrants, and immigrants from northwest Europe, but in view of the limited number of agriculturalists available in Great Britain, the reluctance of the French to emigrate, the restrictive emigration laws in Germany and Russia, and the small numbers of immigrants available in Scandinavia,<sup>2</sup> Sifton decided to look to southern and eastern Europe for potential agricultural immigrants. This decision was to change Canada's ethnic make-up, thus posing several questions to Canadians about the nature of their society.

Favourable circumstances in Canada's agricultural industry helped the government's immigration promotion. Canada had just emerged from a depression; the Canadian Pacific was clamoring for traffic and freight; the prices of western staple products were rising while transportation costs to Europe were falling. The introduction from the United States of new inventions in farm machinery along with the appearance of mechanical grain elevators and an early maturing wheat made it possible

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<sup>1</sup>House of Commons, Journals, 1900, p. 317.

<sup>2</sup>Mabel Timlin, "Canada's Immigration Policy, 1896-1919", p. 520; C.J.E.P.S., 1960, J.W. Dafoe, Clifford Sifton in Relation to His Times (Toronto, 1931), p. 141.



to cultivate, seed and harvest large stretches of land with comparative speed and market the grain.<sup>1</sup> These "pull" factors would have been insufficient without the basic "push" factors among the economically deprived groups throughout Europe who were looking for new opportunities.

The number of immigrants entering yearly increased rapidly. In 1897, 21,716 immigrants entered Canada. During the first decade of the 20th century, a total of 1,265,492 immigrants entered. The number of immigrants in the next decade totalled 2,066,901 despite the fact that the war greatly curtailed immigration. The maximum reached was 402,432 in 1913. Canada's population as a whole increased by 34 per cent between 1901 and 1911, and Alberta's population increased by five and a half times.

### British

Albertans, like other English-Canadians, were anxious to populate the province with people most like themselves -- British and American immigrants. These settlers could help build a society along lines similar to the society of Ontario and the Maritimes where most of the native Canadians in Alberta had been raised. Sifton made strenuous attempts to promote farm immigration from Britain, especially northern England and Scotland, by establishing agencies, sending immigration promotion agents, and giving high bonuses to immigrants from this area.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Hedges, Building the Canadian West, (New York: 1939), p.126.

<sup>2</sup>John Dafoe, Clifford Sifton, p. 138.



Although Sifton had difficulty attracting British agriculturalists, there was a fairly large immigration of unemployed laborers from British cities. With western lands and new industries beckoning, British immigrants looking for better economic opportunities began turning to Canada rather than the United States for new homes. By 1905, more Englishmen, and by 1907 more Scots, were emigrating to Canada than to the United States. During the period 1904 to 1914 almost two-fifths of the two and a half million immigrants who entered Canada were British.<sup>1</sup> Some British immigrants settled on farms and ranches in Alberta<sup>2</sup> and English, Scottish, and Welsh miners found jobs in the burgeoning coal mining industry, but the majority found work in the cities where they came to form an important part of the merchant and professional class.

The influx of large numbers of unemployed British emigrants into Canada in 1907 and 1908, assisted by the Salvation Army for charitable purposes and by the Canadian Manufacturers Association for economic purposes (to serve as strikebreakers), aroused hostility from labor organizations in eastern Canada. Labor pressed for restrictions on this type of immigration, and in urban areas where most of the unemployed British congregated, "No English need apply" signs became prevalent.<sup>3</sup> Frank Oliver as Minister of the Interior

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<sup>1</sup>Roland Berthoff, British Immigrants in Industrial America, 1790-1950, (Cambridge, Mass. 1953).

<sup>2</sup>Groups of English farmers settled at Lloydminster, Pine Lake, Nightingale, Sedgwick, Brooks, and ranchers settled at Macleod, Pincher Creek, and along the foothills to Calgary.

<sup>3</sup>L.G. Reynolds, The British Emigrant, (Toronto, 1935), p. 37.



defended British immigrants, arguing that all British people could not be condemned because some individuals were undesirable, and blaming manufacturing interests for the overstocked labor market. But in 1908 he issued an Order in Council to stop this inflow.<sup>1</sup>

Unemployment among the British was not as serious a problem in Alberta cities as it was in Winnipeg and Toronto, and the "English need not apply" notices were not common in Alberta. C.A. Magrath, a former manager of the North-west Coal and Navigation Company in Lethbridge, and Medicine Hat's Conservative M.P., stated that he had not met any Englishman to whom this phrase might be applicable and the Lethbridge Herald apologized for one such notice that appeared in the classified section.<sup>2</sup>

In every field, the British in Alberta enjoyed the highest status and rose most easily in the social system. British were always rated as the most desirable settlers by Alberta's newspapers and by immigrant officials.<sup>3</sup> Some welcomed them as an aid in the preservation of British institutions which they felt were being threatened by eastern European peasants.<sup>4</sup> The similarity of their cultural background, including their language, religion, and political ideas

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., May 9, 1906, Jan, 14, 1908; Timlin, "Immigration Policy", p. 523.

<sup>2</sup>Canada's Growth and Problems Affecting It (Ottawa, 1910), p. 89.

<sup>3</sup>L.N., April 5, 1900, Feb. 26, 1913; C.H., July 7, 1898; E.B., May 29, 1899, April 29, 1903, March 3, 1910, April 2, 1913.

<sup>4</sup>J.S. Woodsworth, Strangers Within Our Gates (Winnipeg, 1909), p. 50; Industrial Canada, March, 1910.





encompassing both the socialist union organizers and the conservative upper class ranchers, made them acceptable to Canadians, especially at a time when Canadians were proud of their imperial connections with Britain. British socialists were tolerated in contrast to radical Americans and eastern Europeans.<sup>1</sup> The British hardly seemed to be "immigrants" in the usual sense: they were not tagged with opprobrious names, and there was no pressure on them to conform to a Canadian norm. In fact, the British were often viewed as models for Canadians who were proud of British traditions and of Canada's place in the British Empire and many upper-middle class Canadians looked to England for standards of taste.

The British intermarried with native Canadians to a greater degree than did other immigrants, and no discrimination compelled them to live apart. British laborers' wages were the highest and they were accepted as equals, or even as superiors. Some British immigrants even shared Canadian prejudices. An "English Rancher" wrote to the Calgary Herald to explain that the reason the Englishmen did not take sufficient interest in public questions as some had charged, was because the votes of "the 'white' people,

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<sup>1</sup>Carter, "Forty Years in the North West", (unpublished manuscript, Edmonton, 1923) p. 5 - chapter on "Nationalities".



the intelligent voters of the country" were "swamped by the Galicians, half-breeds, and other uneducated, depraved and easily debauched elements of the population of this so-called British country." The representation of Alberta in the House of Commons was not being decided by "Canadians, Englishmen, Scotchmen and Irishmen, but by Galicians, Swedes, Halfbreeds, and Mormons."<sup>1</sup> The ethnic biases of English workers often thwarted trade union leaders who tried to unite them with non-English speaking Canadians.

The British immigrants stressed their common Protestantism against the unfamiliar religions of the other foreign born and they did not share the fears of other immigrants that their religion might be lost. Also, unlike other European immigrants, the British did not always have to establish their own congregations since many were already in existence and Canadians readily accepted them into their churches and social and fraternal organizations. Indeed many Canadians joined British organizations like the Orange Order<sup>2</sup>, the Sons of England<sup>3</sup>, Irish Clubs<sup>4</sup>, the Caledonian

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<sup>1</sup>C.H., Nov. 22, 1900.

<sup>2</sup>Membership of the Orange Order included Irish, Scotch, English and some Americans. (L.N., July 14, 1905; C.A., Oct. 14, 1918.)

<sup>3</sup>C.A., April 23, 1912.

<sup>4</sup>C.A., March 27, 1912; M.G., Feb. 21, 1896.



Society (Scots), the Kentish Society, St. David's, St. Andrew's,<sup>1</sup> St. Patrick's and St. George's Societies<sup>2</sup>, as well as fraternal orders like Odd-Fellows, Masons, Order of United Workmen, and the Foresters. Women from the British Isles joined with those from eastern Canada to establish branches of the "Imperial Order of the Daughters of The Empire", "The Daughters and Maids of England", and the "Loyal, True Blue Organization" (an anti-Catholic organization like the "Orange Order" with a very small membership.) As a result of the cooperation between immigrants and native Canadians, the clubs of entirely British origin quickly lost their old world character; these ethnic organizations, unlike those of many eastern European groups, did not isolate their members from the broader society, and were not established for defensive purposes.

Despite the general esteem in which the British were held as immigrants, criticism was not absent. One of the most common criticisms of Englishmen was that they did not know how to farm: the technical ignorance, moral turpitude and laziness of some of the remittance men was proverbial.<sup>3</sup> One writer described

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<sup>1</sup>M.G., Dec. 5, 1894.

<sup>2</sup>L.N., April 28, 1904, March 16, 1905.

<sup>3</sup>Howard Kennedy, New Canada and the New Canadians (Toronto, 1907) p. 95, 102, 103. See also F.G. Roe, "Remittance Men", Alberta Historical Review, January, 1959, pp.3-12. On remittance men see also poem by N.R.H. Bullen in Wetaskiwin Times, May 9, 1907; but see E.B., March 21, 1913 and E.J., May 10, 1913 for favorable comment on the English farmers.



Englishmen who tried to pioneer as a "failure" since they were not always willing to work. The leadership difficulties in the Barr colony at Lloydminster reinforced these notions.<sup>2</sup> There was also criticism of some Englishmen for a poor attitude toward Canada, and for their "bumptiousness".<sup>3</sup> Some British immigrants felt that most of the good in Canada was British, and a few were annoyed that they did not receive the deference they expected. The Calgary Herald described such a man as a "blatant ignoramus who regards us as uncouth and newly-arrived colonials, ... who is ignorant of the first rudiments of manners, who lacks breeding, and is a boor and a cad."<sup>4</sup>

The British ranchers in southern Alberta introduced a tradition of leisure which was foreign to the "Protestant Ethic" values prevailing in North America; some criticism was directed against their leisure time activities, including the English sports of cricket, polo, and fox hunting. One member of the House of Commons expressed a willingness to promote immigration to western Canada only of those who were "willing to work". "Not the gentlemen who come out to buy a large area of land and who fritter away their time with a lot

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<sup>1</sup>W.J. Carter, "Nationalities", p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>On Barr colonists, see C.H., April 11, 16, 17, 22, May 4, 29; June 8, 12; Aug. 18, 1903.

<sup>3</sup>Magrath, Canada's Growth, p. 89.

<sup>4</sup>C.H., Jan. 2, 1908. Undoubtedly, this type of resentment played an important part in the development of Canadian nationalism.





of dogs and that sort of thing..."<sup>1</sup> But all of this criticism was only minor, and lacked nativistic significance.

### Americans

The acceptance accorded the large influx of American farmers between 1898 and 1914 by government officials, businessmen and newspapers differed little from the acceptance of British immigrants.<sup>2</sup> Government officials regarded the American farm settlers as ideal since they brought with them machinery, capital, and the farm skills which would enable them to farm successfully in western Canada. Middle-class Canadians were not only pleased by the boost which these settlers gave to the economic development of the province, but realized that the Americans could help them in the establishment of schools, churches, community institutions and political institutions which they both regarded as essential to civilized life. Unlike eastern and central Europeans, the Americans had experience with self-government.

Between 1898 and 1914, American emigrants, mostly tenant farmers from the mid-west, came to western Canada to take up land. The influx reached its peak in 1910 and 1911 when 103,798 and 121,451 American settlers registered with immigration

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<sup>1</sup>House of Commons Debates, 1901, c. 2940.

<sup>2</sup>For another assessment of attitudes toward Americans with which my interpretation is basically in accord, see Robert Sloan, "The Canadian West: Americanization or Canadianization?" Alberta Historical Review (Winter, 1968), p. 1-7.



officials (although thousands more crossed the border without registering). Between 1907 and 1915, American citizens made forty per-cent of the homestead entries in the North West.

Group settlement among Americans in Alberta was not typical except for the Mormons and residents of the U.S. of foreign birth who were bound together by language, religion, or both.<sup>1</sup> American immigrants were scattered throughout the province but were concentrated especially in southern and central Alberta. In southern Alberta Americans formed the majority of the settlers along the railways from Lethbridge to Medicine Hat, from Macleod to High River, and from Nobleford to Vulcan. While figures on American-born in Alberta inevitably defy interpretation since there is no way of knowing how many of the American-born were children of European parents, the figure of 81,000 which the 1911 census records<sup>2</sup> probably gives a good idea of the numerical impact of Americans.

Both Liberal and Conservative Ministers of the Interior between 1896 and 1920 encouraged immigration from

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<sup>1</sup>Hansen and Brebner, The Mingling of the Canadian and American People, p. 232.

<sup>2</sup>Census of Canada 1911, Table XIX, p. 445.



the U.S.<sup>1</sup> Immigration officials and the Mounted Police officers spoke in highest terms of the Americans.<sup>2</sup> Canadian periodicals compared American immigration favorably to eastern European and even British immigration.<sup>3</sup> While some eastern newspapers criticized Fourth of July celebrations, their attitudes toward American immigration were not hostile and few expressed fears that the west would be Americanized.<sup>4</sup>

Both the rural and urban press in Alberta welcomed the influx.<sup>5</sup> The Lethbridge News dismissed the fears of the British writers who were writing of the American invasion of Canada<sup>6</sup> and wrote that the Americans had been taught the blessing of

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<sup>1</sup>For deputy minister J.A. Smart's views see House of Commons Journals, 1900, p. 309. For expression of views in Oliver's paper see E.B., June 26, 1906. The movement was seen in this article as a means of increasing Canadian, American, and British cooperation. See House of Commons Debates, 1911-1912, p.3154 for Roger's attitudes. Under Calder, an arrangement was made with the Western Railway and Land Company for the promotion of agricultural immigration from the U.S. (Canadian Annual Review, 1916, p. 589.)

<sup>2</sup>D.I. Report, 1900-1914; R.N.W.M.P. Report, 1907, p. 76.

<sup>3</sup>Aubrey Fullerton, "The Lure of the Better West", The Canadian Magazine, December 1905, p. 132.

<sup>4</sup>C.A.R., 1903, p. 395.

<sup>5</sup>C.H., July 11, 30, Aug. 2, 1898; Aug. 11, 1904; May 18, 1905, April 10, 1906. E.B., Nov. 23, 1896, Oct. 12, 1900, Jan. 21, 1905, May 7, 1906, March 4, 23, 1912. M.H.T., Jan. 16, 1908. Medicine Hat Daily News (hereafter cited as M.H.N.) Nov. 10, 1898. Lethbridge Herald (hereafter cited as L.H.) Nov. 16, 1905, March 26, 1910. L.N., June 18, 1902, Sept. 11, 1908. Raymond Rustler, June 4, 1909. Fort Macleod Advertiser, June 1, 1909. Fort Macleod Spectator, April 8, 1913. E.J., Feb. 21, 1914.

<sup>6</sup>Archibald S. Hurd, "The Foreign Invasion of Canada", The Fortnightly Review (Dec. 1, 1902), p. 1064.



popular self-government and would continue to carry on these traditions in Canada. They would make as ardent Canadians as their forefathers had made ardent Americans.<sup>1</sup> The Lethbridge Herald praised the "High Grade Immigration", and dismissed fears of Americanization:

Of recent years there has been a vast immigration of settlers from the United States to the fair and fertile domains of Alberta and the Canadian West generally. This class of immigration is of the top-notch order, and every true Canadian should be proud to see it and encourage it. Thus shall our vast tracts of God's bountifulness...be peopled by an intelligent, progressive race of our own kind, who will readily be developed into permanent, patriotic, solid citizens who will adhere to one flag--that which protects their homes and their rights--and whose posterity will be educated in our schools, become a part of our commonwealth and eventually assume their logical positions as important factors in our commercial and political life--in fact become by natural evolution a part and parcel of and inseparable from our proud standard of Canadianism. 2

Fears of Americanization, the Herald continued, were groundless since "the greater will absorb the lesser." The editorial concluded, "Are not our laws comprehensive enough, our national intelligence high enough, our resources great enough... and our future assured enough to defy an attitude of superiority from any other country on the face of the earth?" Dave Elton, a proud native of England and editor of several newspapers in the Mormon towns before becoming a Lethbridge lawyer, wrote in Lethbridge's special publicity supplement<sup>3</sup> that

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<sup>1</sup>L.N., Sept. 11, 1908.

<sup>2</sup>L.H., Nov. 15, 1905.

<sup>3</sup>April, 1910.





fears of the "American invasion" were totally unjustifiable. The Canadian government and the Canadian people realized that the American settler was the best and foremost of her immigrants. Elton invoked the Anglo-Saxon tradition to stress the desirability of these immigrants. The people of the United Kingdom, of the self-governing nations of the British empire and of the U.S. were "joint trustees" for the protection and expansion of Anglo-Saxon civilization.

Alberta's politicians, with the notable exception of R.B. Bennett, welcomed the Americans. Premier Rutherford told Magrath residents that American citizens without exception soon became loyal Canadian citizens.<sup>1</sup> Strathcona's M.P., W. McIntyre, dismissed fears of Americanization, arguing that the proportion of Americans in Alberta was small, that they contributed to the agricultural development of the province and that they took upon themselves the full responsibility of citizenship.<sup>2</sup> John Herron, Macleod's Conservative M.P., denied charges that he opposed American immigration and stated that he considered Americans to be western Canada's "best settlers".<sup>3</sup>

The Americans enjoyed almost as high a status as British immigrants or native Canadians. They were not thought of as

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<sup>1</sup>L.H., August 26, 1908.

<sup>2</sup>House of Commons Debates, April 9, 1907, c.6187.

<sup>3</sup>House of Commons Debates, 1909-10; April 27, 1910, c. 8202-04.



immigrants in the same sense as were European immigrants.<sup>1</sup> Americans even shared many of the prejudices of British immigrants and Canadians . Frank Oliver used objections of American settlers to Galicians as a prime reason for keeping the latter out.<sup>2</sup> It is not surprising that one of the major areas of Ku Klux Klan support in Alberta in the late '20's were towns south of Calgary which included numbers of Americans.<sup>3</sup>

Americans joined with native Canadians and British immigrants to establish farmer's cooperatives and social organizations. Acceptance of the Americans extended to the point that Canadians joined American fraternal organizations like the Woodmen, Eagles, and Moose. Americans were able to join churches which Canadians had already established, since the Americans were predominantly Methodist and Presbyterian with some Congregationalists, Baptists, and Lutherans. While some of the sects that Americans brought to Alberta-- including the Assembly of God, Christian and Missionary Alliance, Church of the Nazarene, Seventh-Day Adventist and Jehovah Witnesses--were new in Alberta,<sup>4</sup> there was no more

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<sup>1</sup>Hansen and Brebner, The Mingling of the Canadian and American Peoples (New Haven, 1940), p. 255.

<sup>2</sup>House of Commons Debates, April 12, 1901, c.2931-2939.

<sup>3</sup>Interview on Klan, Mrs. F. Frazer, Calgary, June, 1969. [Vulcan, Bow Island, Claresholm, Enchant, Lomond, and Arrowwood.]

<sup>4</sup>W.E. Mann, Sect, Cult, and Church in Alberta (Toronto, 1955) Chapter 2.



than the usual amount of friction between denominations and sects, and any opposition to them lacked nativist significance.

Acceptance of Americans included their farmer's organizations - the Society of Equity and the Non-Partisan League - which they established, and many native Canadians and British joined these organizations. Many Americans arrived steeped in populism and agrarian discontent and reacted in much the same way they had in the United States when they found similar economic conditions: a debtor west dependent on a creditor east. It did not seem remarkable that positions of leadership in farm organizations like the United Farmers of Alberta should be in the hands of Americans like Henry Wise Wood. As W.L. Morton observes, "As there was no prejudice one way or another, this reliance upon immigrants for leadership was the result of free competition of talent and personality".<sup>1</sup> By 1918, of the executive and Board of Directors of the United Farmers, eight were American-born, five Canadian-born, five British-born, and one New Zealand-born.

If there had been significant opposition to American immigration, it should have emerged during the federal election of 1911 when reciprocity with the United States was the major issue. While there was some fear expressed by conservative newspapers of annexation to the United States, the source of the fear was not the American immigrant. As Bicha has pointed out, specific

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<sup>1</sup>W.L. Morton, Progressive Party in Canada (Toronto, 1950), p. 39.



references to the American migration or the American presence in western Canada were rare during the reciprocity debates and expressions of annexation sentiment by American politicians were not opposed by linking such statements to the danger of Americans in Alberta.<sup>1</sup> While Conservatives won only one seat in Alberta, the Herald made no issue of American support for Liberals in other constituencies; it emphasized that the sole winning Conservative, R.B. Bennett, had received American support.<sup>2</sup>

There was some criticism of Americans by Conservatives, although it was generally not important or sustained, and in any case had no impact on government policy. Some concern was expressed by eastern intellectuals over the type of immigrants who would be attracted by immigration propaganda which emphasized get-rich-quick possibilities. Adam Shortt, a prominent economist, wrote:

The industrious, shrewd, thrifty, enterprising, and self-reliant are not likely to be caught by any such chaff (propaganda) but the thriftless, unstable, mortgage-eaten and poverty-stricken elements...willing enough to have prosperity thrust on them. 3

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<sup>1</sup>K.Bicha, The American Farmer (Lawrence, Kansas, 1968), pp. 135-136.

<sup>2</sup>C.H., Sept. 22, 1911.

<sup>3</sup>Adam Shortt, "Some Observations on the North West", Queen's Quarterly, 1895, p. 194.





R.B. Bennett expressed his feelings to a Canadian Club meeting in Montreal that "Protestant ethic" values were in jeopardy when Americans could get rich easily.<sup>1</sup> As a Conservative, he also feared that the notions of populism which many Americans brought with them might foster unrest in Canada and that they would not make good British citizens because of their hatred for the monarchical forms of government.

Reaction in Alberta to Bennett's speech was almost universally negative. The Calgary Albertan defended the Americans as western Canada's "very best settlers" and concluded that by stirring up ethnic tension, Bennett was the dangerous man, not the American settler, since his statements might become self-fulfilling prophecies by alienating American settlers.<sup>2</sup>

The outcry against his speech caused Bennett to reconsider. Senator Lougheed denied that Bennett had made the statement, and issued a defence of the American, who was appreciated "for his enterprise, his energy, and his loyalty to Canadian institutions." No settler was assimilated more rapidly.<sup>3</sup> However, in 1913 during the Naval debate, Bennett again expressed reservations about the loyalty of some

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<sup>1</sup>Speech at Canadian Club in Montreal, L.H., March 12, 1912.

<sup>2</sup>C.A., March 12, 1912.

<sup>3</sup>Debates, Senate 1911-1912, March 14, p. 468.



Americans in Alberta,<sup>1</sup> and charged that many Americans had voted for reciprocity "since Uncle Sam wants it."<sup>2</sup>

American Mennonites who arrived in Alberta in larger numbers after 1896 continued to receive a favorable reception, although they were regarded as being different from other Americans. The great variety of Mennonite groups -- including Old Mennonites, Mennonite Brethren in Christ, Holdemanites, and General Conference Mennonites--was not apparent to most Canadians who perceived them as an undifferentiated group. Mennonites were not regarded differently from other American sectarians such as the Dunkards and were recognized as good farmers. The fact that they remained small in numbers<sup>3</sup> and that they were spread widely throughout the province (although mainly in central Alberta) meant that they attracted little attention.<sup>4</sup>

Mennonites were more "visible", of course, in areas such as Didsbury where they formed the majority of the population. The local press noted the missionary activities, the revival meetings, and interdenominational activities of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ.<sup>5</sup> The election of two Mennonite

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<sup>1</sup>House of Commons Debates, 1913, c.3955-3956.

<sup>2</sup>L.H., March 1, 1913.

<sup>3</sup>There were 1,524 in Alberta by 1911. (Census of Canada, 1911, Vol. 1, Table 11, p.5.)

<sup>4</sup>Aron Sawatzsky, "The Mennonites of Alberta and Their Assimilation", M.A., Univ. of Alberta, 1964, Chap. 1 and 2.

<sup>5</sup>Didsbury Pioneer, Oct. 11, 1907; June 2, 16, Sept. 8, 1909; Jan. 19, June 29, 1910.



M.L.A.'s<sup>1</sup> from the Rosebud constituency is indicative not only of the concentration of Mennonites in the area, but also of the degree of acceptance of Mennonites there.

Press comments on Alberta's Mennonites were favorable. Accusations which were made regarding the exclusiveness of the Mennonites in Manitoba did not mention Alberta's Mennonites,<sup>2</sup> and since no Old Colony Mennonites settled in Alberta before 1920, the school question which arose in Manitoba and Saskatchewan over non-attendance of Mennonite children did not arise in Alberta. The Calgary Herald described the Mennonites at Didsbury as "thrifty, honest, well behaved," and a prosperous class of settlers.<sup>3</sup> But these favorable attitudes toward the Mennonites were to change with the coming of World War I and the subsequent realization that numbers of pacifists were living in Alberta.

Attitudes toward the Dunkards, another German-American pacifist sect, were similar to those toward the Mennonites. Dunkards first settled near Medicine Hat in 1902, and planned immigration soon brought several new congregations to the Queenstown, Brant and Arrowwood districts. The Brethren were the dominant social group in

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<sup>1</sup>C. Hiebert, Conservative, and J. Stauffer, Liberal.

<sup>2</sup>E.B., Oct. 24, 1898.

<sup>3</sup>C.H., July, 1906; see also E.B., Jan. 2, 1899.



Arrowwood for many years; however, their strong temperance stand and pacifism resulted in a significant social cleavage between them and the non-Dunkards in the area. In terms of the whole province, the Brethren settlements were so small that they attracted very little attention.<sup>1</sup>

### Northern Europeans

Northern Europeans including Dutch, French, Scandinavian and German settlers who came to Alberta were given a warm reception since they were culturally similar to English-Canadians and could aid in the economic development of the province. Settlement of Dutch in Alberta began in 1900 when Reformed immigrants from Overijssel settled in the Granum and Monarch areas. Other Dutch settlers (some from the United States) settled later in the decade at Edmonton, Strathmore, Alderson, and Neerlandia.<sup>2</sup>

Immigration officials, the Canadian Pacific Railway and the press welcomed the Dutch. The immigration commissioner wrote that ". . .they are likely to prove very desirable settlers."<sup>3</sup> The Canadian Pacific encouraged the settlement of Dutch Catholics on its land at Strathmore, and sent a Dutch Catholic priest to Holland to promote immigration. J.S. Dennis, the superintendent of irrigation for

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<sup>1</sup>There were 464 Dunkards in Alberta in 1911. (Census of Canada, 1911, Vol. I, Table 11, p. 4.)

<sup>2</sup>Henry Lucas, Netherlanders in America, 1789-1950, (Ann Arbor, 1955) p. 461; Hedges, Building, pp. 209, 210, 284, 285; C.H., April 5, 1911.

<sup>3</sup>D.I. Reports, 1908, S.P. #25, p. 90.





the Canadian Pacific wrote that the "Hollanders" were "the very best settlers".<sup>1</sup> The Bulletin described the Dutch-Catholics as "splendid looking specimens" and the Calgary Herald observed that Dutch were "good people to cultivate".<sup>2</sup> But the number of Dutch settlers remained small.<sup>3</sup>

The small number of French immigrants<sup>4</sup> who were scattered throughout the province, but concentrated mainly in central Alberta east of Red Deer, were well received by immigration officials. But they received very little notice in the urban press. While many French-Canadians were pleased to have French immigrants because they believed that their presence would facilitate French language maintenance, some of the French-Canadian clergy was disturbed by the lack of religiosity of the new immigrants.<sup>5</sup>

Germans and Scandinavians (largely from the United States) who arrived in increasing numbers after 1896, were considered to be among Alberta's best citizens since they were culturally similar and could thus readily assimilate.<sup>5</sup> Many had acquired

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted in Hedges, Building, p. 222.

<sup>2</sup>C.H., quoted in E.B., June 15, 1906.

<sup>3</sup>There were 1,136 Dutch-born in Canada in 1911; this, however, does not include some of Dutch parentage who had been born in the United States.

<sup>4</sup>Most were farmers, but there were some ranchers and merchants.

<sup>5</sup>The clergy referred not only to French immigrants; French Canadians were also included in the criticism. Lupul, "Relations", p. 34.

<sup>6</sup>C.H., July 7, 1898; E.B., June 3, 1897.



farm skills in the western U.S. and so were eminently suited to western Canadian agricultural conditions. The fact that they came from "northern" nations may have also been a factor in their acceptance since these countries were viewed by many as having produced strong and powerful individuals.<sup>1</sup> The earlier Germans and Scandinavians cleared the path for the favorable reception of later arrivals: the earlier immigrants had found a secure niche in places where they contributed to the establishment of the community. Both of these groups were continually contrasted favorably to Galicians by native Canadians.<sup>2</sup>

Norwegian-Americans settled through the province after the turn of the century.<sup>3</sup> The wide dispersal pattern was also evident among Swedes (mostly Swedish-Americans) who settled at Stavely, Scandia and Bow Island in the south, and throughout the central part of Alberta.<sup>4</sup> Danes and Finns,

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<sup>1</sup>See C. Berger, "True North" in Peter Russell, Nationalism in Canada (Toronto, 1966), p. 102.

<sup>2</sup>D.I., 1897, S.P. #13, p. 201. For favorable comments on Scandinavian immigration, see also D.I., 1908, S.P. #25, p. 90.

<sup>3</sup>Groups settled at Foremost, Enchant, Diamond City, and Claresholm in the south, at Loughheed in central Alberta, and in the Peace River at Grande Prairie and Valhalla.

<sup>4</sup>At Warburg, Clive, Meeting Creek, Edberg, Westeros, Kingman, Donalds, Hay Lakes, Amish, Hughenden and Czar.



who formed a much smaller portion of the Scandinavians in Alberta, were concentrated in the central portion of the province.<sup>1</sup> The wide distribution of the Scandinavians facilitated both their acceptance and their assimilation.

Scandinavians were usually regarded as a unit and there were no varying images for each nationality. The universal assessment of Scandinavians was favorable. W.J. Carter, an Edmonton resident, wrote that Scandinavian-Americans were among the "most progressive" settlers in the west, and Strathcona's Liberal M.P., McIntyre, described them as "most desirable settlers".<sup>2</sup> The assessment by authors writing on all Scandinavians in Canada was also uniformly laudatory.<sup>3</sup>

Specific Scandinavian nationalities were usually singled out for special attention either by politicians at election time or by the press during one of its frequent outbursts of boosterism. J.J. Young, Calgary's Conservative

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<sup>1</sup>The Danes at Dickson, Olds, Markerville, Ponoka, Innisfail, Standard and Dalum, and the Finns at Eckville, Sylvan Lake, Redway, Hughenden, Stettler, and further south at Mannyberries. (Hedges, Building, p. 207; Ferdinand Baglo, Augustana Lutherans in Canada, Canadian Conference of the Augustana Lutheran Church, 1962, p.22,76,77; Eugene Van Cleif, "Finnish Settlement in Canada", Geographical Review, Vol. xlii, #2, April, 1952, p. 264)

<sup>2</sup>Carter, "Nationalities", p. 13; House of Commons Debates, April 9, 1907, c. 6189.

<sup>3</sup>J.T.M. Anderson, Education of the New Canadian (London, 1918), p.39; A. Fitzpatrick, Handbook for New Canadians (Toronto, 1919) p.200; J.S. Woodsworth, Strangers Within Our Gates (Toronto,1909) p. 87.



M.L.A., praised the Swedes as "industrious, sober, enterprising, and law abiding, and who by virtue of their physical and intellectual development were pre-eminently fit to cope with the pioneer conditions of western Canada", and the Calgary News Telegram described the Danes as an "excellent class of settlers".<sup>1</sup> The only concern which was expressed about possible negative impact of Scandinavians was by the Presbyterian church which worried about the influence of socialism among Finns in central Alberta.<sup>2</sup>

With the exception of a tiny violent cult of German-Russians near Medicine Hat, known as the "Dreamers", Germans in Alberta received as warm a reception as the Scandinavians. While there was some settlement of Germans in scattered areas of southwest Alberta,<sup>3</sup> the major portion of people of German descent who arrived in Alberta between 1896 and 1914 settled in central Alberta (east of the Calgary-Edmonton Railway), in the Medicine Hat region in southeastern Alberta, and in the region directly west of Edmonton, Germans formed the largest non-British group in these areas.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>C.H., Oct. 30, 1900; C.N.T., Jan. 10, 1913.

<sup>2</sup>Acts and Proceedings of 39th General Assembly (Toronto, 1913), p. 45.

<sup>3</sup>Vulcan, Champion, Claresholm, Granum, Pincher Creek, Magrath, Milk River.

<sup>4</sup>Census of Canada, 1911, pp. 162-169.





The German-speaking immigrants in Alberta came from a wide variety of national and religious backgrounds. The immigrants came not only from the U.S. and Germany, but large numbers came from German speaking communities in Russia, Russian Poland, Hungary, Switzerland, Roumania, and parts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.<sup>1</sup> The settlement of German-American Catholics centered in east central Alberta.<sup>2</sup> While the Stony Plain area west of Edmonton was made up largely of German Protestants (Lutherans and Reformed), the German settlements north of Medicine Hat were composed of both Catholic and Protestant German-Americans. Germans also began moving into the urban areas of Edmonton, Calgary, Wetaskiwin, Lethbridge, and Medicine Hat where they concentrated in unskilled and semi-skilled construction and manufacturing jobs connected with the expansion and growth of these centers.

The Germans in urban areas lived mostly in lower income residential districts.<sup>3</sup> However, concentration in these lower status residential areas cannot be interpreted only as a sign of social and economic discrimination. Lack of education and skills forced them to accept lower-income

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<sup>1</sup>Elizabeth Gerwin, "A Survey of the German Speaking Population in the Province of Alberta," (M.A., University of Alberta 1938), p. 58.

<sup>2</sup>At Heisler, Spring Lake, and Forestburg, but other German-American Catholics of German-Russian background settled on CPR land at Acme, Beiseker, Carbon, and Brooks.

<sup>3</sup>In the Riverside district of Calgary, in the north east part of Edmonton around the packing plants, east of the tracks in Wetaskiwin, on the north side in Lethbridge, and north-east of the river in Medicine Hat.



occupations, but those who were more skilled pushed up quickly, and many of the immigrants or at least their children had soon risen enough socially and economically to move into better residential areas.

Government officials, newspapers, local boards of trade, and the CPR encouraged the settlement of the Germans. The CPR made strenuous efforts to attract Germans along with other non-English speaking settlers to its irrigation bloc east of Calgary, since company officials believed that ethnic colonies were socially stable and could act as nuclei to attract further immigration.<sup>1</sup> The Citizens' Press Bureau of Edmonton, an organization set up by businessmen to attract immigrants, advertised in Germany and was instrumental in the promotion of German immigration to the Edmonton area.<sup>2</sup> A Department of the Interior official reported that through their steady industry, the Germans had been able to obtain enough funds to bring friends from Germany.<sup>3</sup> In the House of Commons Frank Oliver described the German as a "man of dominant race, of untiring energy, of great foresight; he is a man of sterling honesty and reliability...of the highest character... ." Unlike the Galicians and Doukhobors, he was not only a producer, but also a citizen.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The CPR helped Germans to settle on irrigated land at Acme, Beiseker, Carbon, Brooks, and Rosebud. (Hedges, Building, p. 191, 298.)

<sup>2</sup>E.B., March 3, 1913.

<sup>3</sup>D.I., 1903, S.P. #25, p. 108.

<sup>4</sup>House of Commons, Debates, 1901, p. 2934.



On a popular level, even those who detested "foreigners" made an exception for Germans who were included as "white people".<sup>1</sup> English-Canadians regarded the Germans from Germany as superior to the Germans from Russia and Poland because of their higher level of education and standard of living -- indeed Germans from Germany regarded the Russian and Polish Germans as inferior.<sup>2</sup> And both Germans and Scandinavians shared the prejudices of native Canadians with regard to the Galicians.<sup>3</sup> There was a greater amount of intermarriage among Canadians and Germans than among Canadians and eastern Europeans.<sup>4</sup>

#### Religious Sects

Not all immigrants from America and Germany were considered desirable. Varying degrees of opposition developed to small religious sects which came from these countries since some of the social practices and beliefs associated with these sects violated prevailing Protestant values.

Mormons, who came in increasing numbers after 1898 to establish an irrigation system in south-western Alberta continued to attract attention. Without polygamy, the Mormons were

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<sup>1</sup>J.S. Woodsworth, Strangers Within Our Gates (Toronto, 1909) p. 100.

<sup>2</sup>Gerwin, "Germans".

<sup>3</sup>C.H., Nov. 1900, "A Swede Protests" in Letter to Editor; and Frank Oliver's comments in House of Commons Debates, 1901, April 12, 2934.

<sup>4</sup>Census of Canada, 1921, Table 49, p. 289.



considered to be desirable immigrants by politicians and the press but the Protestant clergy saw in Mormonism a threat to Canadian civilization and to Christianity. To increase agricultural yields, the Mormons in southwestern Alberta had begun irrigating, and their success aroused the hope that a government-financed irrigation project might be started.<sup>1</sup> C.A. Magrath, an official of the Northwest Coal and Navigation Company, which owned the coal mines at Lethbridge, hoped that the Mormons could undertake a scheme to irrigate and settle a large bloc of land which the company had been granted along its railway from Lethbridge to Great Falls, Montana. Negotiations proceeded between the company and church officials, and a contract was signed whereby the church agreed to furnish the labor for the canal. Magrath was able to arrange for British capital to help finance the irrigation project.

Conditions in Utah were favorable towards Canadian settlement since by 1898 the Mormons had utilized the resources in the Great Basin and were seeking new economic opportunities. During the summer of 1898, settlers arrived daily to work in the irrigation project and established the towns of Magrath and Stirling. A new surge of Mormon settlement in Canada began in 1901 with the establishment of

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<sup>1</sup>See for example, the article by C.O. Card in Calgary Herald, Feb. 29, 1896.





a sugar factory in Raymond through the promotion of Jesse Knight, a wealthy Utah mine owner, and John W. Taylor, the church official in charge of the Mormon settlements in Canada. Beginning in 1906, Mormon families began settling on the Cochrane ranch which the church had bought where they established the villages of Glenwood, Hillspring, and Hartley and formed the United Irrigation District to promote irrigation. Mormons also moved into other farming areas in south-western Alberta and a few began moving into Lethbridge. C.A. Magrath, who had been the first mayor of Lethbridge, influenced Lethbridge civic authorities to offer favorable incentives to the Raymond Milling Company to establish a flour mill in Lethbridge and in 1907 Mormon laborers from Raymond and Magrath commenced work on the mill.

The contributions that Mormons made to irrigation in southern Alberta undoubtedly helped to allay hostility toward them since irrigation was essential to the agricultural success of southern Alberta. The knowledge that the Mormons were now arriving, not to escape anti-polygamy laws, but in search of economic opportunity, also made it easier for the rest of the community to accept them.

The Mormons' involvement in financial dealings with prominent business and government officials gave the Mormons added prestige, and these officials defended them publicly. The Dominion government had been concerned by the small flow of immigrants into the area. Consequently it



looked with favor on the company's contract with the Mormon church for colonizing the territories, and the approval of the Canadian government had given encouragement to the British investors.

Canadian Pacific officials followed the construction of the irrigation project with friendly interest, since the Alberta Railway and Irrigation Company, a subsidiary of the North-West Coal and Navigation Company, was potentially an important feeder to the Canadian Pacific Railway with which it connected at Dunmore. Sir A.G.T. Shaughnessy helped finance the project,<sup>1</sup> and William Van Horne wrote favorably of the Mormons.<sup>2</sup> North-West Coal and Navigation Company officials, like C.A. Magrath, were also enthusiastic about Mormon settlement: Magrath defended the Mormons in his book, Canada's Growth, stating that they had made substantial contributions to southern Alberta agriculture, and had a very low crime rate. Their relatively small numbers, he assured his readers, made it effectively impossible for them to gain political control of Alberta as some feared.<sup>3</sup> The church's discontinuation of polygamy also removed the objection to Mormons on moral grounds.

Alberta's newspapers, in a rapid change of opinion, carried several favorable articles on the irrigation project

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<sup>1</sup>Hedges, Building, p. 173.

<sup>2</sup>C.H., June 1, 1899.

<sup>3</sup>Canada's Growth, p. 120-123.



and on Mormon settlement, which reflected the optimistic booster spirit of the times.<sup>1</sup> The Calgary Herald described Mormons as people "deeply imbued with the religious sense, thrifty, industrious, charitable, and tolerant."<sup>2</sup> Full page articles told of the "prosperity" and "progressiveness" of Raymond, Magrath and Cardston,<sup>3</sup> and the Herald printed a full supplement on the Mormons, telling of the progress of each town. The Albertan described the Mormons as "excellent citizens" and commended them for their "industry" and "peaceableness".<sup>4</sup> The Calgary Eye Opener was just as effusive.<sup>5</sup>

But the discontinuation of polygamy and the Mormon contribution to agriculture were not the only causes of the change in attitude toward them. Sectarian conflict was blunted by the desire that all Albertans join together in building a new province and the social fluidity of the frontier facilitated rapid changes in attitude. The fact that Mormons

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<sup>1</sup>C.H., Jan. 5, 12, 19, 1905. L.H., July 26, 1906, Aug 16, 1906.

<sup>2</sup>C.H., March 29, 1905.

<sup>3</sup>C.H., Jan. 5, 1905, Jan. 19, 1905.

<sup>4</sup>C.A., June 21, 1906.

<sup>5</sup>Calgary Herald Supplement, 1905.



had been among the first settlers to arrive in southern Alberta also meant that they had helped build community institutions in the area, and came to regard themselves and came to be regarded as one of the "charter groups" in the area. The influx of Eastern Europeans and Orientals also drew attention away from the Mormons. Besides, anti-Mormon sentiment as expressed by partisan oriented newspapers would not have helped the political fortunes of their respective parties in Mormon areas. It is probably no coincidence that the Calgary Herald's special publicity feature on the Mormons appeared a few months before the 1905 provincial election.

The Liberals and Conservatives vied for their support, and attempted to secure Mormon candidates to carry their party banner in areas which were predominantly Mormon. The parties even attempted at times to appeal to the "Mormon vote"<sup>1</sup> by labelling the other party as anti-Mormon. In the 1900 federal election, the Cardston Record charged that the Conservative Senator, Lougheed, had libeled the Mormons. The Conservative paper, the Calgary Herald, heatedly denied this charge.<sup>2</sup> During the 1905 provincial election the

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<sup>1</sup>The attempts to appeal to the "Mormon vote" were ineffective since, despite a prevailing myth to the contrary, there was no unified Mormon vote. The Mormons were just as partisan and just as divided in their political beliefs as their neighbors, although until 1921 the majority voted Liberal. See my "Mormon Political Behavior in Alberta", Tangents, Vol. 1 #1, 1969, p. 85-112.

<sup>2</sup>C.H., Dec. 6, 1900.





Conservatives in the Cardston constituency attempted to gain support by circulating a statement made by Prime Minister Laurier during the autonomy debates alleging that "The Galicians are certainly Christians, but the Mormons are not."<sup>1</sup> Local Liberals hurriedly asked Laurier for an explanation. Laurier attempted to explain that he had meant that the Mormons were not Catholics or Protestants and continued, in a statement intended for circulation, that the Mormons were "excellent citizens and their conduct is unimpeachable."<sup>2</sup> This statement helped allay resentment and the Liberal candidate Woolf was returned with the largest Liberal majority in southern Alberta. The Conservative attempt in the 1908 federal election to convince the Mormons that the Liberal candidate Simmons was anti-Mormon was also ineffective.

Both Conservative and Liberal politicians in Alberta defended the Mormons against the charges of the Protestant clergy, arguing that the Mormons were not practicing polygamy, and that their vote was not controlled. In 1907 Frank Oliver, who had come to know the Mormons personally and was now anxious to obtain Mormon support for the Liberals, spoke favorably of them and their agricultural contributions:

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<sup>1</sup>House of Commons Debates, 1905, c. 8519.

<sup>2</sup>P.A.C. Laurier Papers, #101699, 101700, 101722-23, 101275-76, 101790, 191791-92..



The region now occupied by Mormons was unoccupied until they came. So far as we can see, it would have remained unoccupied for interminable periods had it not been for their knowledge of like conditions in the United States...They have given an object lesson in agriculture in the south-west corner of the Canadian provinces which has increased the value of the whole semi-arid region...<sup>1</sup>

Southern Alberta's Conservative M.P., John Herron, in a speech in the Commons obviously meant for home consumption, enumerated the group's virtues and defended the Mormons against charges that they were not Christians, and that they practiced polygamy.<sup>2</sup> During the 1907 session of the provincial legislature, a whole array of Liberal M.P.'s praised the Mormons for their low crime rate and temperance and defended them against charges that they practiced polygamy and that the church hierarchy controlled their vote.<sup>3</sup>

The acquaintance of politicians with Cardston's M.F.P., John Woolf, and of newspaper editors with Dave Elton, the founder of several newspapers in Mormon towns, did much to alleviate prejudice towards Mormons among these opinion leaders. Elton's associates chose him as president of the Alberta Press Association, and Premier Sifton asked Woolf to accept the position of Minister of

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<sup>1</sup>C.A.R., 1907, p. 296.

<sup>2</sup>House of Commons Debates, July 10, 1906, c. 7581-7584

<sup>3</sup>Mackenzie, Cross, Robertson, and Simmons made the favorable speeches. E.J., Feb. 28, 1907.



Agriculture.<sup>1</sup> Elton's status was sufficiently secure as a newspaperman, lawyer and a member of the Sons of England that he could engage in public discussion on the desirability of Chinese and American immigrants.

#### Anti-Mormon Crusade

Despite Mormon denials<sup>2</sup>, rumors that polygamy was still practiced continued to excite Protestant ministers and women's organizations and some newspapers in western Canada

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<sup>1</sup>C.H., June 9, 1904; C.A., Sept. 16, 1907. John Blue, Alberta Past and Present (Chicago: 1924), Vol. II, p. 120-124. L.H., June 19, 1937.

<sup>2</sup>Mormons denied that polygamous marriages had been entered into since 1890. (C.A.R. 1904, p. 564; C.H., June 9, 1904; L.H., April 2, 1908.)

Nevertheless after the 1890 Manifesto which officially discontinued polygamy, John W. Taylor and Mathias F. Cowley, church leaders in charge of the Canadian settlements, quietly argued without church approval that the Manifesto did not apply outside the U.S. They maintained that it was acceptable for Canadian Mormons to continue the practice of polygamy, and in fact solemnized a small number of plural marriages in Alberta after 1890. Their ideas were not acceptable to the hierarchy of the church, and they were forced to resign in 1905. The few who had contracted plural marriage gave it up at this time. Their position was discovered by church officials in 1904 when they were requested to go to Washington as witnesses in the investigations regarding the seating of Senator Smoot. This led to the "Second Manifesto" on April 6, 1904, at which time President J.F. Smith stated that plural marriages which had been entered into after 1890 were not solemnized with the sanction or consent of the church. Taylor was excommunicated in 1911 when he refused to recant his beliefs. (J.F. Smith, Essentials in Church History, (Salt Lake City, 1953) p. 630-631.)



and Ontario. These reformers viewed polygamy as an attack upon monogamy and upon the rising status of women. Polygamy had to be uprooted. But polygamy was not the only concern of Protestant reformers. Alleged Mormon authoritarianism and theocratic political beliefs were viewed as anathema not only to the individualistic values that Protestantism encouraged, but to the basic framework of democracy. The attack eventually extended to almost all aspects of Mormon theology and the Mormon church.

From 1890 to 1920, Mormonism loomed as an important issue in the minds of Canadian Protestants. While the constant agitation over the Mormons in Utah focused attention on the Mormons in southern Alberta, the attack on Mormons in Alberta did not reach the proportions it attained in the United States.

The Presbyterians were the most active denomination in the anti-Mormon crusade. The issue was viewed as an area of reform in much the same way as intemperance and poverty. Social gospel theology encouraged involvement in efforts to root out social evils, and Mormonism was believed to be one of these evils. Presbyterian ministers wrote and distributed a considerable number of anti-Mormon books and pamphlets, lectured on the evils of Mormonism,<sup>1</sup> and established a

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<sup>1</sup>See for example request by the Alberta synod for support of the Assembly's Home Mission Committee to defray the cost of a lecture on Mormonism at Robertson Church. (A Digest of the Proceedings of the 7th Meeting of the Synod of Alberta, Presbyterian Church in Canada, April 22-24, 1913, p. 5.)





"Home Mission" in the Mormon towns in southern Alberta in an effort to convert the Mormons.<sup>1</sup> The "Mormon Question" became an almost annual topic at the meetings of the Presbyterian Synod of Alberta, and the Canada-wide General Assembly. An anti-Mormon committee submitted annual reports to the General Assembly on the "Mormon Question"; in 1911 the list of this committee's members read like a Presbyterian "Who's Who".

The anti-Mormon literature which the Presbyterian church sponsored made the same accusations as the anti-Mormon literature in the U.S. and Europe. Mormonism was un-Christian, and its doctrines were dangerous; its leaders were scheming and its followers were "deluded". The leaders demanded absolute obedience of their members in religious, material, and political relationships. The Mormons "controlled vote" was one of the most dangerous aspects of their faith since they cherished "extravagant political ambitions".<sup>2</sup> The Presbyterian position was embodied in the anti-Mormon book of W.A. Toombs, a Presbyterian Minister who had served in southern Alberta.

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<sup>1</sup>A variety of Protestant demoninations sent missionaries to Utah to convert Mormons back to Christianity during the late 19th century.

<sup>2</sup>Mormon theocratic beliefs had been abandoned by this time. Klaus Hansen, Quest for Empire, (Chapter 9.) The Protestants' concern over the alleged political influence of church leaders was similar to their concern over the influence of the Catholic clergy. Anti-Mormon and anti-Catholic sentiments had many of the same roots in that both were viewed as threats to the separation of church and state, and to the individualistic values which Protestantism encouraged. The fear that Mormons would undermine institutions of self-government was also similar to the fear that central and eastern Europeans would undermine these institutions. See below, p.145-146.



When the Adam-God theory and celestial marriage are linked together, you have a priestcraft more dangerous, more sensual, and more devilish than any on earth, while at the same time it is more aggressive, energetic and unscrupulous than any that has ever claimed Divine authority and power.

The appeal of Mormonism, according to Toombs, could only be explained by the opportunities which it offered to those with economic, political and lustful ambitions, since Mormonism was a commercial and social institution before it was a religious institution:

Its system of government and the blind obedience it imposes upon its devotees offer tempting openings to unscrupulous and sensual men. 1

Another common anti-Mormon theme, which Toombs used, was the condemnation of the "secret" temple rites.<sup>2</sup> In his view, some legal measures had to be taken against this secrecy: "Everything secret or hidden that goes in the name of religion should be compelled to be revealed", and secondly a law should be passed prohibiting "flagrant adultery and polygamous cohabitation."<sup>3</sup>

Presbyterians began missionary work among the Mormons in Alberta in the early 1890's, sending missionaries to Raymond<sup>4</sup> and Cardston.<sup>5</sup> Considerable interest was

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<sup>1</sup>Toombs, Mormonism, (Toronto, 1916?), p. 38.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>L.N., March 30, 1893.

<sup>5</sup>Minute Books, Calgary Presbytery, Sept. 30, 1896, p. 47.  
St. Stephen's Theological Library.



manifested in these endeavors by Presbyterian womens' organizations throughout the country and dignified and purposeful women gathered at teas to discuss the evils of Mormonism and gather funds to aid the missionary work.<sup>1</sup> But in fact, little missionary work was done among the Mormons. Mormons were uninterested and pastoral work among non-Mormon settlers took up all the time of those assigned to the Mormon missions. One missionary told the Presbyterian General Assembly in 1914 that he did not engage in active proselytizing among the Mormons since he saw his purpose to be "the strengthening of the life of our own people rather than the proving to Mormons the error of their beliefs or practices, a demonstration for which they have no relish."<sup>2</sup> The crusade encountered no success and was more significant for the body of thought it evoked than for its conversions.

Methodists, who were also impelled by social gospel ideology toward a reforming zeal, became concerned about the Mormon issue. One chapter in J.S. Woodsworth's Strangers Within Our Gates which was published in 1909 by the "Young People's Forward Movement Department" of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Church was devoted to the Mormon question. Woodsworth, quoting the anti-Mormon literature

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<sup>1</sup>For a report of a tea in Edmonton, see J.G. MacGregor, Edmonton, A History (Edmonton, 1967) p. 122.

<sup>2</sup>Proceedings, Presbyterian General Assembly, 1914, p. 46. See also Proceedings, 1915, p. 49.



of Josiah Strong, a prominent American social gospeler, argued that Mormons had a controlled vote and as such posed a "serious menace to our Western civilization".<sup>1</sup>

While acknowledging their industry, Woodsworth warned:

"...of greater importance to our country than material development are freedom and morality and true religion and to these the system of Mormonism is antagonistic. 2

Mormon doctrines were inconsistent with Christian teachings and "directly inimical to the welfare of the State".

Woodsworth warned against the evils of polygamy and church hierarchy:

"The practice of polygamy will subvert our most cherished institutions. But more dangerous even than polygamy is the utter surrender of personal liberty, and the acknowledgment of the absolute authority of the priesthood. This means the end of all free government, and is the confessed aim of the leaders of the Mormon Church."

Methodists cooperated with the Presbyterians in the Home Mission to the Mormons.<sup>3</sup>

The fears that the church leaders had absolute control of the Mormons seemed to be given substance when news circulated first that all Utah Mormons would move to Canada<sup>4</sup> and later that Alberta's Mormons were moving to Nevada so that the Mormon church could gain political

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<sup>1</sup>Woodsworth, Strangers Within Our Gates, p. 83.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Digest, Presbyterian Assembly of Alberta, 1913, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup>Quote from Toronto Telegram in L.H., March 30, 1908.





control of the state to insure that Mormons would be safe from persecution.<sup>1</sup> D.H. Elton denied these charges arguing that the Mormons were satisfied with their treatment in Canada. The article was misleading since it implied that Mormons were "priest ridden" but in fact on two or three occasions members from Cardston had defeated at the polls men of higher standing in the church.

While Alberta's newspapers emphasized the desirability of the Mormons because of their agricultural contributions, American court cases involving the seating of the Mormon representative B.H. Roberts and Senator Reed Smoot continued to excite anti-polygamy sentiment in the press. The News approved of the American Congress' decision to exclude Utah's polygamous representative, Apostle B.H. Roberts. It noted that while the Mormons in southern Alberta were "progressive", polygamists were not welcome in Canada.<sup>2</sup> The Calgary Herald stated that Mormons were desirable citizens but trumpeted that the "hideous institution of polygamy cannot be tolerated."<sup>3</sup>

Various womens' organizations became active in the agitation against Mormons. The Women's Christian Temperance Union and Canadian Council of Women both discussed the Mormon issue and passed resolutions expressing concern about

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<sup>1</sup>C.N.T., March 12, 1912.

<sup>2</sup>L.N., Feb. 8, 1900; also June 21, July 25, 1905.

<sup>3</sup>C.H., March 16, 1905.



polygamy.<sup>1</sup> One persistent theme in the criticism of Mormonism concerned the relationship of the Mormon missionary system to polygamy.<sup>2</sup> The 1905 annual convention of the W.C.T.U. pictured Mormon missionaries swarming over Saskatchewan and Manitoba persuading young and innocent girls to go to southern Alberta to live in polygamous relationships.<sup>3</sup>

While the federal government resisted calls for an investigation of polygamy among the Mormons, polygamists were among the undesirables who were to be excluded under the immigration act of 1910.<sup>4</sup>

Certainly not all feminists became convinced that Mormons in Alberta were practicing polygamy and one prominent crusader for women's rights, the writer Emily Murphy, defended the Mormons against charges of polygamy and political corruption.<sup>5</sup> Mrs. Murphy's defence of the Mormons stemmed not only from her personal acquaintance with them, but also from a feminist's concern for civil rights. She dismissed fears that Mormons presented a menace

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<sup>1</sup>L.N., Nov. 15, 1905, Raymond Leader, Nov. 9, 1911.

<sup>2</sup>Young, Isn't One Wife Enough? (New York, 1954), p. 19.

<sup>3</sup>L.N., Nov. 15, 1905.

<sup>4</sup>House of Commons Debates, March 21, 1910, c. 5814-15.

<sup>5</sup>Canada Monthly, Dec. 1910, p. 83-90.



to Christianity or Canadian civilization, and condemned the anti-Mormon campaign of the Presbyterian Assembly as a violation of the spirit of Protestantism and Canadian nationalism -- Canada had welcomed (with the exception of the Chinese) "all classes, all national creeds, irrespective of their political or religious opinions..."<sup>1</sup> She attributed Protestant proposals to prevent Mormon missionaries from preaching in Canada or leaving Canada to preach abroad to frustration induced by the lack of success of the Home Mission to Alberta's Mormons. Having investigated the status of Mormon women upon the request of the Canadian Council of Women, she could report that there was no proof that polygamy was being practiced; those who made such charges without evidence were reprehensible.<sup>2</sup>

After the agitation concerning the Smoot case in the U.S. had died down, the Alberta press defended the Mormons. The Calgary Herald assured its readers that polygamy was unknown in southern Alberta, that crime was non-existent among the Mormons, and that the Mormon vote was not controlled. The writer argued:

"There need be no fear of the Mormons grafting ulcers on the body politic although a number of hysterical clergymen and women forwarded a petition for the [sic] investigation to the Canadian parliament". 3

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted in Raymond Leader, Nov. 9, 1911.

<sup>2</sup>C.A., Dec. 11, 1911.

<sup>3</sup>C.H., Jan. 15, 1908.



There was nothing about the Mormons to investigate: the "wayfaring man's" only hope was that these "western busybodies ...would howl themselves hoarse."<sup>1</sup>

Other American sects were culturally deviant to the point that Albertans would not tolerate them. The possible settlement of the Sharpites (Adamites) was opposed by the Alberta press.

A small group of Sharpites had come to Canada in July, 1908 under the leadership of James Sharpe who claimed to be Christ and asserted that he had a divine mission to the Doukhobors. One group of twelve, led by Sharpe, that passed through Saskatchewan was armed and the police feared violence, but the Sharpites were allowed to preach among the Doukhobors. Since they were opposed by Veregin, they had little success and returned to the United States. Shortly thereafter in August, 1908, a group of Sharpites attempted to come to Alberta. They told the immigration officer at Twin Lakes that "time, poison, or cannon balls" could not harm them. They claimed that they would live in their present bodies forever. "Then you must live in the United States" replied the immigration agent. "There would be no Dreamers, Adamites or any other ites for agent Humphries."<sup>3</sup>

One tiny religious cult composed of German-Russians

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<sup>1</sup>C.H., Jan. 15, 1908.

<sup>2</sup>L.H., July 8, 1908. Gilbert Johnson, "The Adamites", Saskatchewan History, Spring, 1970, p. 70-74.

<sup>3</sup>L.H., August 25, 1908.





and known as "Dreamers" aroused some hostility because of their erratic behavior. Jacob Merkle, Sr., a disturbed farmer who claimed to be co-equal with God, started the group among German-Russians in South Dakota during the 1890's. Although they called themselves the "People of God", the group was known as "dreamers" since part of their worship service consisted of telling and interpreting dreams. Members of the group maintained that one's dreams had to be carried out; aggressive and hostile dreams led to aggressive and hostile acts. "Dreamers" in South Dakota had been convicted of various acts of arson and assault.

In 1906 a petition was circulated among settlers and ranchers in the Josephsburg area where nine "dreamer" families had settled, asking to have them deported. Although nothing came of this because the "Dreamers" had become citizens, some were prosecuted for violation of the "Lord's Day Act", since they held their services on Saturdays and worked on Sunday.<sup>1</sup> Hostility towards them became pronounced when they became the focal point of an arson case in Medicine Hat in 1908.

John Lehr, a settler in the Medicine Hat area, and possibly an ex-"dreamer"<sup>2</sup>, began to receive threatening letters from Jacob Merkle in South Dakota. These letters, which were

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<sup>1</sup>Alberta Provincial Archives. Attorney General Files, C.W. Cross to Woods, August 6, 1907.

<sup>2</sup>This would seem to be the only plausible reason for Merkle's hostility toward Lehr, though the latter claimed he did not know why Merkle would be hostile.



signed "Revenge", quoted liberally from scriptural sources to show that the fate of Satanic agents like Lehr was destruction by fire.<sup>1</sup> Lehr's circulation of these letters increased hostility toward the "Dreamers". On April 11, 1908, his house was destroyed by fire, and the circumstances pointed to foul play. Lehr laid a complaint before the Justice of the Peace, and the heads of "Dreamer" families were arrested, partly as a means of providing protection for them against incensed neighbors.<sup>2</sup>

The trial attracted widespread publicity in western Canada. Although some of the evidence pointed to one of the "Dreamers", and ex-"Dreamers" testified that part of the creed of the religion was to murder and burn<sup>3</sup>, nothing could be proven. The "Dreamers" were bound over to keep the peace and had to deposit a guarantee.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The letter stated: "And I will send a fire on Magog and among them that dwell carelessly in the dales and they shall know that I am the Lord". Another letter stated, "Have I not prophesied that you would be destroyed by fire". The letters, which often contained vivid sexual insults, were obviously the product of a deranged mind.

<sup>2</sup>Alberta Provincial Archives, Attorney General's File, Police Supt. Lethbridge to Commissioner of R.N.W.M.P., Regina, April 19, 1908.

<sup>3</sup>E.B., April 24, 1908.

<sup>4</sup>M.H.T., April 16, 23, May 7, 1908. One of the Dreamers was sentenced to jail for two years for perjury.



Central, Southern and Eastern Europeans

While northern Europeans were welcomed, considerable opposition developed to the central, southern and eastern European immigrants who began arriving in larger numbers after 1896 in response to the lure of free homesteads and of the jobs in railroading and coal mining. Almost one third of Canada's immigration between 1897 and 1900 was composed of these immigrants. The percentage of foreign born in Alberta, excluding those born in Britain and the United States, increased from seven percent of 25,277 in 1891 to 16.79 percent of 73,082 (12,262) in 1901, the major portion coming from Austria-Hungary.<sup>1</sup> This percentage of foreign-born had decreased slightly to 16.39 percent of 374,295 by 1911 and 12.59 percent of 588,454 in 1921.<sup>2</sup> By native Canadian standards, these peasants from Europe were educationally deficient, socially backward, and strange in appearance, indeed, almost as strange as the Chinese.

The eastern Europeans provoked much of the same ethnocentric response which the Chinese had provoked, but hostility toward eastern Europeans in western Canada had other causes. The nativist sentiment which appeared in some sectors of society stemmed from fears that eastern Europeans would undermine Anglo-Saxon institutions, and was stimulated by the sense of status deprivation which many native Canadians felt when it appeared that the only immigrants who could be attracted to Alberta were the "scum of Europe".

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<sup>1</sup>5,648 in Alberta in 1901.

<sup>2</sup>Census of Canada, 1921, Table 5, p. 239.



With the arrival of these immigrants a defensive nativism developed in many sectors of society, despite the general confidence that was felt in British institutions and the widespread optimism about the future of Alberta which was nourished by economic prosperity. Therefore it would be difficult to ascribe the hostility towards Galicians to economic motivation since there can be no question that it was univervally recognized that the new immigrants contributed substantially to the prosperity of the west. While most pronounced from 1898 to 1902, nativism continued as a force until the war when it gained added vigor.

a) Galicians and Doukhobors

The group which bore the brunt of nativist hostility in Alberta were the "Galicians" (Ukrainians and Poles), because they were the most conspicuous and numerous continental European group to arrive in Alberta. Large numbers arrived over a short period of time and most settled in blocs raising fears that they would not be assimilated.

The first land-starved Ukrainian peasants from Galicia began arriving in western Canada in 1892, and the trickle became a flood after 1896 through the promotion of Dr. Josef Oleskow, a wealthy Ukrainian intellectual, and through the promotion of steamship companies. This heavy immigration continued until the outbreak of World War I,





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when 150,000 Ukrainians had entered Canada. The Ukrainians preferred to settle in the northern wooded areas of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta since these areas provided wood for homes and fuel, but unfortunately this land was poor agriculturally. Their choice of this land was not a result of discrimination by government officials but stemmed from their own preferences, although the government apparently did little to discourage them from this choice.

Ivan Phillipiw, the first Ukrainian peasant in Canada, settled in the Star area east of Edmonton and this area became the nucleus of the Galician settlement after 1898. The peasants who came to north eastern Alberta usually took up homesteads as close to each other as possible, and generally settled according to the old world provincial alignments.<sup>2</sup> Ukrainians settled almost the whole bloc bordered by Thorhild, Spedden, Mannville, and Lamont,

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<sup>1</sup>This figure can only be approximate since it depends on how one defines "Ukrainian". Many persons who spoke a common language (Ukrainian) called themselves different names: Ruthenian, Galician, Bukovinian, Austrian, Pole. The word "Ukrainian" did not come into prominence until after World War I. (Paul Yuzyk, Ukrainians in Manitoba, (Toronto, 1953), p. 30; V.J. Kaye, Early Ukrainian Settlements in Canada: 1895-1900, (Toronto, 1964), p. 318.)

<sup>2</sup>Galicia and Bukovina



although there were other nationalities in the area, including a few Polish peasants and Jewish merchants from Galicia. Whole districts were made up of Ukrainian immigrants from the same village in Europe and many of the villages were named after those they had left behind. Ukrainians also settled in other scattered areas of the province,<sup>1</sup> but mainly in a wide radius around Edmonton.

In scattered Ukrainian communities they re-established much of their previous way of life, including Ukrainian style houses, tools and clothes, and most of their social patterns. They also re-established as best they could the Russian Orthodox and Greek Catholic churches which they had known in the old world.<sup>2</sup>

Indistinguishable from Ukrainians in the minds of native Canadians were Polish peasants who were also attracted by the free land in western Canada. Poles in all three prairie provinces settled among Ukrainian farmers who came from the

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<sup>1</sup>Ukrainian farmers settled west of Leduc toward Breton, north from Redwater to Athabaska, at Peace River, between Thorsby and Viking, and in scattered districts in southern Alberta as land became too scarce in the original bloc to accommodate continued immigration. A few Ukrainians were attracted by work in the mining and railroad industries in Alberta and some remained permanently in coal towns, but most returned to the farms as soon as they had enough money to establish themselves.

<sup>2</sup>T.C. Byrne, "The Ukrainian Community in North-Central Alberta", (University of Alberta, 1937), p. 30; Alexander Royick, "Ukrainian Settlements of Alberta", Canadian Slavonic Papers (Vol. X, #3, 1968, p. 278-297; J.G. Macgregor, Free Lands (Toronto, 1969).



same areas in Galicia.<sup>1</sup> Not all the Polish farmers in Alberta settled in the Ukrainian bloc; Polish farmers began opening land north of Edmonton towards Athabaska as land became scarce in the original places of settlement.<sup>2</sup> Like other central and eastern Europeans some Poles worked on railroads and in mines until they could obtain enough money to establish themselves in agricultural areas and some settled permanently in mining towns in southern Alberta.<sup>3</sup> A few Poles and Ukrainians began moving into the rapidly growing cities of Calgary and Edmonton where they acquired unskilled jobs in the booming construction industry, in commercial firms and in service occupations.

The confusion between Poles and Ukrainians in the minds of Canadians is easy to understand because the two groups were culturally similar and identified with each other socially, although there was tension between the two groups in parts of the province. In spite of

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<sup>1</sup>Poles settled in the Ukrainian bloc at Beaver Hill Creek, Skarro, Krakow, Wostok, Round Hill, Rabbitt Hills, Calmar, Bittern Lake and Polska.

<sup>2</sup>New settlements were made at Tawatinaw, Opal, Waugh, Egremont, Radway, Chipman, and further east at Warwick, Flat Lake, and Peguis, and around Calmar and east of Camrose.

<sup>3</sup>Diamond City, Staffordville, and Taber, and in the Crow's Nest Pass at Coleman and Blairmore. They also settled at Exshaw, Canmore, and Bankhead and in the Coal Branch. [The information on Polish settlement in Alberta has been compiled from local histories W.B. Makowski's History and Integration of Poles in Canada (Lindsay, Ontario, 1967), p. 151-157, 159-167 and from the extensive personal journals of Father A. Sylla OSM, a Polish Catholic priest. (In possession of Father Sylla, Edmonton.)]



their religious differences, there was a considerable degree of intermarriage between the two groups. The Poles were subsumed under the category "Galician" since the Ukrainians outnumbered them three to one.<sup>1</sup>

The press and public reaction to the arrival of "Galicians"<sup>2</sup> in Alberta was univervally negative. Albertans who had long been promoting increased immigration found themselves face to face with the same type of immigrants who had been arousing nativist anxieties in the United States. While dislike of some of the "Galician's" personal and cultural characteristics caused some prejudice, ethnocentrism was not the only cause of the opposition which developed to newcomers. The poverty of the immigrants upon their arrival aroused concern that they would become dependent on charity, and reports of smallpox among the immigrants brought the threat of Galician immigration to an intensely personal level. While initial hostility was based largely on concern about poverty and disease, the continued opposition to Galician immigration sprang from Anglo-Saxon nativist fears; illiterate immigrants would drag down the cultural level of

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<sup>1</sup>The 1911 Census records 2,243 Poles in Alberta but this considerably underestimates the actual number since many registered as Austro-Hungarians. The 1921 origins figure of 7,172 is probably somewhat inflated, since some Austro-Hungarians did not want to be identified as such because of animosity the war had aroused.

<sup>2</sup>Galicians numbered at least 23,827 in Alberta by 1921 (number of Ukrainians listed by census). The popular stereotype included Poles, which would increase the number by 7,172, and an indeterminable number of Ukrainians listed themselves as Russians (21,212) although they were regarded as "Galicians".





the whole area and undermine British governmental institutions since they had no experience with self-government. Could not Scandinavian, German, British, and American immigrants, and eastern Canadians be attracted instead? What was wrong with Alberta that only the dregs of society came to the area? Would any other settlers come to Alberta once they found out they would have to live near Galicians?

The Conservative press<sup>3</sup>, who were strong believers in the importance of preserving British institutions, and were anxiously seeking a campaign issue, expressed the most intense anti-Galician sentiment, and began a campaign for immigration restriction. A flood of editorials in Conservative papers condemned the Galicians as dirty, poor, sickly, rebellious, and immoral.<sup>4</sup> The Calgary Herald wanted to know why Sifton was handing the north west over to "dirty hordes of half-civilized Galicians" who came "lacking everything but dirt".<sup>5</sup> One Herald editorial thundered:

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<sup>1</sup>C.H., July 7, 11, 16, 1898; January 19, May 18, 1899.

<sup>2</sup>C.H., Feb. 9, 1899.

<sup>3</sup>Papers were not official party organs but the Lethbridge News, Macleod Gazette, Coleman Miner, Edmonton Journal, and particularly the Calgary Herald consistently supported Conservative policies and candidates. The Edmonton Bulletin, Calgary Albertan, and Lethbridge Herald and most of the rural press were all generally Liberal.

<sup>4</sup>C.H., Aug. 11, 1898, July 11, 16, 27, 1898; July 27, Jan. 19, Feb. 2, 9, 1899. Another possible cause of greater nativism among Conservatives is that they were concentrated in urban areas and probably had less understanding of and sympathy for rural peasants than did Liberals, who had greater rural support.

<sup>5</sup>Jan. 19, 1899.



What is this country coming to?  
Doukhobors pouring in by the thousands  
on the eastern slope, Galicians swarming  
over the central portions and rats taking  
possession of Dawson City, one would imagine  
that Canada had become a veritable dumping  
ground for the refuse of civilization. 1

The Macleod Gazette warned of the dangers to the body politic  
of unassimilated people who were in no position to assume the  
duties and responsibilities of citizenship.<sup>2</sup>

Once the immigrants could vote, Conservatives were  
further disturbed by the fact that the Galicians invariably  
voted Liberal.<sup>3</sup> In the minds of the Conservatives, this proved  
their undesirability. The Macleod Gazette lamented that no  
politician could state that he was opposed to "promiscuous  
foreign immigration", since he would alienate the immigrant  
vote.<sup>4</sup> Conservatives began pressing for tighter naturalization  
laws to make it more difficult for immigrants to vote, thus  
limiting their political power.

Despite the fact that he sat as an independent  
Liberal M.P., Frank Oliver, the editor of the Edmonton Bulletin,  
joined Conservatives in the attack in the House of Commons on

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<sup>1</sup>C.H., Feb. 2, 1899.

<sup>2</sup>M.G., Nov. 23, 1900.

<sup>3</sup>This statement is based on an analysis of voting returns  
in federal elections.

<sup>4</sup>M.G. Ibid.



Galician and Doukhobor immigration. While the Bulletin's first reaction to the Ukrainians had not been unfavorable,<sup>1</sup> continued settlement of Galicians in the Edmonton area aroused the hostility of the paper:

That they are not the most desirable immigrants is made evident at a glance... They are not a people that are wanted at any price. 2

While agreeing with those who wanted to see the west filled, Oliver argued that it would be better to exclude Galicians and Doukhobors since despite the fact that they were good agriculturalists, they would hinder the development of the new "civilization" which settlers from eastern Canada were trying to establish, since their culture was entirely different. Consistent with his liberalism, Oliver denied that feelings of racial or cultural superiority motivated his opposition to these immigrants. "It is not necessary to say that such people are not as good as we are. [The foreigner] may be a better man, but he is not one of us...he is not helping us to develop along those lines providence has chosen for us, or that we have chosen for ourselves."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Edmonton Bulletin, May 14, 21, 1896.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., Dec. 14, 1896, June 13, 1898.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., April 8, 1901.



Oliver discounted the argument that the Galicians and Doukhobors were responsible for prosperity in western Canada. The area had been developed through the efforts of men from eastern Canada: "I believe the present conditions of the country would be better, our prosperity would be greater, and we would have a still larger number of good settlers if we did not have that class of immigration at all." While Oliver cautioned that Galicians were still "serfs" because they had not had any opportunity to rise above that position since they had been oppressed by Poles and Germans, he did not draw the conclusion that Galicians should be allowed in since they would improve if given the opportunity.<sup>1</sup> On the contrary, he wanted to exclude them since "they know nothing of free institutions." To those who argued that the Ukrainians would eventually be assimilated, he replied that this would mean "inter-marriage of your sons and daughters with those who are of an alien race and of alien ideas" and such an idea was abhorrent to him.

In the House of Commons in 1901, Oliver warned that there was no issue that the people of the west felt more strongly about than the immigration question, and there was nothing that westerners resented more "than the idea of settling up the country with people who will be a drag on our civilization and progress."

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<sup>1</sup>House of Commons, Debates, April 12, 1901, c. 2934.





The Conservative press<sup>1</sup> and Frank Oliver were the most vocal critics of Ukrainian immigration, but other individuals and groups also raised objections. Illiteracy and poverty were of course the major objections, but a whole range of other cultural patterns came under attack. Writers criticized intemperance, uncleanness, dietary oddities, alleged dishonesty, avarice, violations of the Sabbath, criminality and the low status of women, although such criticisms were also commonly made of other eastern European groups.<sup>2</sup> The western Canadian Women's Christian Temperance Union was alarmed about the status of Galician women, and the 1905 convention at Winnipeg, after hearing testimony that brides were being sold into slavery among this "debased population of southern Europe", discussed the possibility of asking the government to take steps to suppress child marriage among Galicians, and prevent further immigration.<sup>3</sup>

Citizen and church groups in the Edmonton Area also opposed the influx. The Edmonton Conference of Methodists sent a memorandum to the Toronto conference in 1899 protesting the influx of "undesirables" and the Parry Sound settlers in the Fort Saskatchewan area discussed the advisability of

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<sup>1</sup>Conservative newspapers in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario were also vocal critics of the Liberals' immigration policy. The Manitoba Conservative's attack on the Liberals' immigration policy helped bring about the defeat of the Greenway Liberal government in the 1899 provincial election. W.L. Morton, Manitoba: A History, (Toronto, 1957) p. 278, 280.

<sup>2</sup>Carter, "Nationalities", n.p.; also Woodsworth, Strangers, p. 133 and "Ukrainian Rural Communities", (Report of J.E. Leuks); J.H. Hardy, "The Ruthenians in Alberta", Canadian Magazine. 1899, p. 83-84.

<sup>3</sup>C.H., Nov. 30, 1905.



petitioning parliament to reserve several townships around them from Galician settlers.<sup>1</sup> Other immigrants anxious to assert their own Canadianism, including Germans, Scandinavians, and Japanese, also attacked the Galicians.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the degree of hostility toward the Galicians in many sectors of the society, there were enough defenders including most western Liberal M.P.'s and Liberal newspapers, to convince Sifton and Laurier that their immigration campaign could build a bigger and better Canada without unacceptable political consequences, i.e., political defeat over the immigration question. While bonuses for Galicians were cancelled in 1898, the government did not want to prevent Galician immigration.<sup>3</sup> After 1902, some Liberals in Alberta defended the immigration policy as economically essential and argued that Galicians could be assimilated.

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., May 29, 1899.

<sup>2</sup>C.H., Nov. 24, 1900. Japanese miners in southern Alberta who were almost entirely literate referred to the illiterate eastern Europeans as "barbarians". (Interview, George Higa, Lethbridge, July, 1969.)

<sup>3</sup>The bonuses for Galicians were cancelled by Sifton after the outcry which accompanied an outbreak of smallpox on the S.S. "Pisa". P.A.C., D.I., 76 Box 86, File 34214: telegram, Sifton, Ottawa, to Strathcona, London, June 18, 1898. (This was seen as a more desirable means of restricting immigrants than passing legislation, (Ibid., #6139).) Bonuses were restored in November, 1898 (Ibid., Box 35G, File 2614, Vol. 3, #69556. Smart to Dominion, London, Dec. 1, 1898.), but this policy was reversed in April, 1899. J.A. Smart wrote that the intention of the government was not to prevent Galicians arriving, but it could not extend bonuses. (P.A.C. Ibid., #93498, J.A. Stuart to W.T.R.Preston, Oct. 26, 1899.)



Some writers expressed admiration for the Ukrainians' peasant values of industry and religiosity.<sup>1</sup> Protestant churches anxious to promote tolerance toward the Ukrainians in order to get support for proselytizing among them, attempted to show that they were rapidly being assimilated.

While the fact that the Ukrainians had settled in blocs aroused anxieties about the possibility of assimilation, the fact that they settled in rural rather than urban areas meant that nativism would not develop to the same degree as it did in cities in the eastern U.S. and Canada. Rural immigrants were more self-sufficient than urban immigrants who became the objects of nativist attacks because of urban ghettos, and the social problems associated with the low standard of living in the immigrant slums in the cities.<sup>2</sup> Rural colonies were also less visible to opinion leaders, and labor competition did not develop.

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<sup>1</sup>Emily Murphy, Seeds of Pine, (Toronto, 1914), p. 222.  
Nellie McClung, The Stream Runs Fast, (Toronto, 1946), p. 163.

<sup>2</sup>J.S. Woodsworth repeatedly contrasted rural immigrants favorably with urban immigrants, and the Canadian immigration policy discriminated in favor of rural immigrants. Hostility towards immigrants in Ontario increased after 1905, owing to urban problems associated with immigrant slums, at the same time as attitudes towards immigrants were relaxing in western Canada. See also Carl Berger, Sense of Power, (Toronto, 1970), p. 149.



Immigration and colonization agents, more prone to judge immigrants on the basis of their agricultural potential rather than their cultural characteristics, were more favorable than other sectors of the population in their assessment of the immigrants, although some western Canadian immigration agents expressed reservations about the types of immigrants arriving.<sup>1</sup> In 1897, Edmonton's immigration agent reported that while the majority of the Galicians were not as desirable as their German brethren from the same provinces, they would, nevertheless, eventually become prosperous through their thrift and industry.<sup>2</sup> The Edmonton immigration agent lumped the Poles and Ukrainians together to describe somewhat favorably the characteristics of the settlers at Edna and Rabbit Hills:

The agricultural sentiment or instinct is strongly developed in these people; simple in their habits, and industrious, with perhaps about the same percentage of vicious and indolent persons common to the grade of civilization to which they belong.

By reason of their frugality they were able to endure the disadvantages of remoteness of market.<sup>3</sup> Edmonton immigration officials reported in 1899 that the prejudice of the English

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<sup>1</sup>P.A.C., D.I., 76 Box 64, File 21103, Vol. 2, #30074, #32611 R.A. Ruttan, agent of Dominion Lands to Commissioner of Dom. Lands, Nov. 30, 1896.

<sup>2</sup>D.I., 1897, p. 201. Deputy Interior Minister Smart described the Galicians favorably. "Up to the present there is no doubt that the Galician has shown himself to be a man who will make a great success of farming work in the North-West." House of Commons, Journals, 1900, p. 312.

<sup>3</sup>D.I., 1898, S.P., #13, p. 528.





speaking neighbors was rapidly disappearing, and merchants in the area considered them desirable settlers.<sup>1</sup> The following year the Strathcona agent reported that the Galicians were doing "extraordinarily well".<sup>2</sup> Another agent stated that they were willing to assimilate and had filled labor needs.

Hostility towards Galicians began to decrease as they proved their worth as agriculturalists and as they became more assimilated,<sup>3</sup> and attacks on them by politicians decreased rapidly once they were able to vote. Frank Oliver developed an effective political machine among Ukrainians and began to defend them. Municipal politicians also attempted to appeal to the Ukrainian vote.<sup>4</sup> As the Conservatives came to perceive that they too might attract the Galician vote, they found it increasingly unwise politically to attack Galician immigration and to interpret their support of the Liberals as further evidence of their undesirability. By 1904 the Calgary Herald carried an article on the visit of an Austrian scholar who found the Galician settlements at Star and Woodstock making "substantial progress".<sup>5</sup> In 1906, the Herald declared: "The Galician settlements improve. . .with wonderful rapidity. . ."

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<sup>1</sup>D.I., 1899, S.P. #13, p. 166.

<sup>2</sup>D.I., 1900, S.P. #25, p. 160.

<sup>3</sup>See below p. 185-186.

<sup>4</sup>See the report of a meeting in Edmonton held by civic candidates for Ukrainians. J.G. MacGregor, Edmonton, A History, p. 184.

<sup>5</sup>C.H., Sept. 15, 1904.



and then went on to describe how each farmer soon built up his farm.<sup>1</sup> But the Herald's attitude towards the Galicians was not one of unqualified admiration,<sup>2</sup> and the Conservative press often reversed its somewhat favorable remarks after election day when the immigrants again voted Liberal.<sup>3</sup>

The arrival in Canada in 1899 of 7,000 Russian peasants who belonged to a non-conformist pacifist sect known as the Doukhobors further aroused the anxieties of Albertans who were already outraged by Galician immigration. The same arguments used in the campaign against Galician immigration were refurbished for the assault on the Doukhobors. Their "strangeness" heightened indignation aroused by their arrival without money, and their settlement in blocs in Saskatchewan increased fears that they would not be assimilated.

Economic and physical privation among Russian Doukhobors in the Georgian valleys in Russia led to attempts by Tolstoyans<sup>4</sup> who were concerned over the plight of the Doukhobors, to look for possible areas of settlement for them. The Tolstoyans became interested in Canada and two Doukhobors and two Tolstoyans left for Canada in 1898 where they met with Sifton to discuss the projected settlement. The Canadian Pacific

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<sup>1</sup>The Albertan condemned this change in the Herald's attitude as hypocrisy: "It was not much more than a year ago that the Calgary Herald published in a sensational way the names of some of the Galicians who supported Frank Oliver. . . as though these persons were not human beings but rather some manner of reptile."

<sup>2</sup>Quoted in C.A., June 22, 1906.

<sup>3</sup>C.H., June 21, 1906.

<sup>4</sup>Disciples of Count Leo Tolstoy.



also encouraged the settlement of Doukhobors, and arranged to transport them from port to their site of settlement at bargain rates.<sup>1</sup>

After the first discussion in Ottawa, the party set off for the prairies. The first area they visited was in the Edmonton district near Beaverhill Lake where they discovered an area of twelve townships that would have provided ample land for all the Doukhobors. However, opposition to their settlement in this area was immediate, and the government decided to look elsewhere. In explaining the opposition to their settlement Oliver wrote, ". . .the addition of some thousands of people who must for a number of years depend upon their earnings from manual labor or upon charity for their support, to the already very large Galician population who are in that condition would aggravate existing conditions to a very considerable degree. . ."<sup>2</sup> Oliver, who remained an opponent of Doukhobor immigration, congratulated the department on its decision to seek some other field for the settlement of the Doukhobors: "The introduction of inferior settlers

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<sup>1</sup>G. Woodcock and I. Avakumovic, The Doukhobors, (Toronto, 1968), p. 132. The Bulletin told of the arrival of the "Spirit Wrestlers" and noted that they had been persecuted because of their belief in non-resistance and communal property. "They are said to be honest, industrious, thrifty, and moral, and rapidly become prosperous whenever allowed the opportunity." (E.B., Sept. 22, 1898.)

<sup>2</sup>E.E., Nov. 7, 1898.



simply means the exclusion to a far greater degree of superior settlers."<sup>1</sup>

Despite this opposition, the government would not object to potential immigrants on the grounds that they believed in pacifism and communal ownership of property, and regarded them as morally and physically desirable settlers. Eventually land was taken up in three areas: the North Colony 70 miles north of Yorkton, the South Colony 30 miles south of Yorkton, and a third area near Prince Albert.

Both press and public opinion in Alberta opposed Doukhobor immigration on the grounds that the Doukhobors were poor and that they would not be assimilated since they were being allowed to settle communally. Resentment was reflected in the argument that the Doukhobors were being given preferential treatment and were pushing aside British subjects and "native sons".<sup>2</sup> Frank Oliver objected to the Doukhobors: "This may be Christianity, philanthropy, charity or any other of the virtues, but it is not immigration."<sup>3</sup> An "independent Liberal" urged voters to support Oliver's stand against a "class of immigration which can prove nothing but a hindrance in every way to the best interests of our young country." The Calgary Herald used the Doukhobor question to attack the Liberal government, objecting to both their poverty and their appearance: the Doukhobors "may be all right for exhibition in museums, but it is unfair to them and to the people of Canada that they should be dumped here

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., Nov. 7, 1898.

<sup>2</sup>E.B., Feb. 27, 1899; Letter to the editor of C.H., Feb. 2, 1899.

<sup>3</sup>E.B., Dec. 22, 1898.





in the Northwest at the people's expense."<sup>1</sup> Some worried that the Doukhobors would increase the serious problem of assimilation that the west faced with the Indians.<sup>2</sup>

Friction soon developed in Saskatchewan between the Doukhobors and government officials: government officials worried over their proneness to criticize Canadian institutions; Doukhobors believed that boundaries between men were unjust and opposed individual land holdings. They also objected to what were viewed as attempts to interfere with their religious lives through laws regulating marriage, divorce, and vital statistics.<sup>3</sup> A problem with homestead laws arose because Doukhobors objected to the oath of allegiance which was required for naturalization as a prerequisite to owning a homestead. The eccentric behavior of the Sons of Freedom sect also produced strain between the Doukhobors and the government, and obscured their pioneering achievements.<sup>4</sup>

Government relations with the Doukhobors worsened with the appointment of Frank Oliver, long-time opponent of

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<sup>1</sup>C.H., May 18, 1899. Other editorials opposing Doukhobor immigration appeared on Jan. 26, 1899, May 18, 1899, March 15, 22, 1900.

<sup>2</sup>C.H., March 8, 1899. Surprisingly, the difficulty of the problems of assimilation involving Indians were seldom invoked in opposition to eastern European peasants despite the fact that the assimilation of Indians was a major concern.

<sup>3</sup>P.A.C. Laurier Papers, 105-268, Sgt. P. Buchanan to Oliver, Dec. 21, 1905.

<sup>4</sup>C.H., Nov. 6, 1902, June 11, 1903, Oct. 22, 1903; Coleman Miner, Jan. 22, 1909; M.G., Nov. 7, 1902.



Doukhobor immigration, to the portfolio of Minister of the Interior, and with the subsequent throwing open of the Doukhobor reserves to non-Doukhobor settlers. In response to pressure from land seekers and in order to promote the assimilation of Doukhobors, Oliver decided in 1907 to enforce strictly individual homestead requirements (including residence requirements and an oath of allegiance for naturalization) which the Doukhobors could not meet because of their village residence and their refusal to take oaths. The government reserved 12,300 acres for the Community Doukhobors in their sixty-one villages, but over half the land entered by the Doukhobors in the years 1903-1905 was taken away from them.<sup>1</sup> According to the Bulletin, the trouble with the Doukhobors was not that they secured property wrongfully or to the disadvantage of others, but

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<sup>1</sup>Woodcock, Doukhobors, p. 222.



that they would not accept land when offered to them. The manner of taking their land away had been "uniquely merciful"; they had been given three months to re-enter for the land if they so desired.

The humanitarian instincts of this charitable nation will scarcely rise in horror at the outrageous oppression of bestowing on these people three times as much land as they had manifested any intention of using and of giving them three months in which to secure as 'their property' and without charge the land they had been holding in idleness for eight years." <sup>1</sup>

Despite this attempt to break down the communal property system, Oliver did not consider all Doukhobors to be undesirable; in fact his attitude toward Doukhobors had changed noticeably since 1900. When discussion arose in the House of Commons over the possible immigration of more Doukhobors, Oliver was careful to distinguish between different groups of Doukhobors.<sup>3</sup> Of the Community Doukhobors, Oliver asserted:

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., Sept. 5, 1907.

<sup>2</sup>House of Commons Debates, March 14, 1910, c.5537.



They are industrious, thrifty, law-abiding, and have added very considerably to the wealth of the country and to that extent are good settlers, but I do not think that those who continue to live in community are as good as those who have gone out on their homesteads. 1

There are at least two possible reasons for Oliver's change in attitude. First, as a representative of the Liberal government after his cabinet appointment, he was more or less obliged to support the immigration policies which the Liberals had established. Second, as Minister of the Interior, he had more direct contact with the Doukhobors, and as a result became more aware of their problems and their achievements, and thus more sympathetic.<sup>2</sup>

Conservative newspapers in Alberta used the Doukhobors as the prime example of undesirability in their attack on the Liberals' immigration policy. The arguments used were the same combination of ethnocentrism and Anglo-Saxon nativism which had been used in the attack on Galicians-- Galicians and Doukhobors were often linked together and attacked at the same time. Fears were also expressed that Doukhobors would undermine the political life of the country since their votes would be bought [sic] and several charges

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<sup>1</sup>Oliver provoked a storm in the House of Commons when he apologized to the Doukhobors for putting them in the same class as Conservative Campbell. See report in L.H., March 16, 1910. But see also E.B., April 20, 1908, for unfavorable comment on Doukhobors.

<sup>2</sup>On his change of attitudes toward Galicians, see p. 115, on change towards Mormons, p. 38.





were made, usually by Conservatives, at election time that the Doukhobors were receiving better treatment than British and Canadian settlers.<sup>1</sup> It is impossible to know how effective these appeals were in gaining votes for the Conservatives since other, probably more important issues, were involved in the election campaigns, but the Conservative candidate in southern Alberta won in both federal elections (1904, 1908) when the issue was raised.

Albertans were not unanimous in their condemnation of the Doukhobors. Many expressed feelings of ambivalence, admiring some qualities, while criticizing others. C.A. Magrath noted that it was rather refreshing to find people deeply concerned in things not of this world, although he feared that they would not be assimilated.<sup>2</sup> Protestant ministers in western Canada also expressed admiration for the deep religiosity of the Doukhobors, as did Emily Murphy. During World War I, J.S. Woodsworth considered joining a Doukhobor community because of their pacifism and communal economic system - despite his dislike of their illiteracy.<sup>3</sup> Liberal papers in

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<sup>1</sup>C.H., Dec. 25, 1902; M.G., Oct. 21, 1904; C.M., Sept. 18, 1908.

<sup>2</sup>Magrath, Canada's Growth, p. 119.

<sup>3</sup>Woodsworth, Strangers, p. 116-123; Salem Bland, James Henderson, D.D. (Toronto, 1926), p. 350; Kenneth McNaught, Prophet in Politics, (Toronto, 1959), p. 79; Emily Murphy, Janey Canuck in the West (London, 1917), p. 48-49.



Alberta usually defended the Doukhobors, arguing that they were good farmers and that they would soon be assimilated.<sup>1</sup>

b) Others

General dislike of all foreigners was more common than specific dislike of any particular groups, although "Galicians" and Doukhobors were the groups most often singled out for nativist attacks. The Hungarians<sup>2</sup>, Czechs<sup>3</sup> and Slovaks<sup>4</sup> who arrived to work in the coal mines on the prairies in southern Alberta and in the foothills of the Rockies were generally lumped together as "Slavs" or just "foreigners" and were usually looked down on. Contempt was usually greater where these immigrants were clustered together in mining towns and were a more visible group than in rural farm areas where there were few Czechs, Slovaks, or Hungarians. The few Serbo-Croatian, Rumanian, Bulgarian, Lithuanian, Slovene, and Russian miners in Alberta<sup>5</sup> and the small settlements of Estonian, Roumanian, Lettish, Bulgarian, and Russian farmers<sup>6</sup> were not distinguished from other eastern Europeans and were lumped in the same category as "Galicians" or "foreigners".

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<sup>1</sup>L.H., Sept. 26, 1907; C.A., May 17, 1906.

<sup>2</sup>At Taber, Drumheller, Nacmine, Rosedale, East Coulee, Diamond City, Hardieville, Lethbridge.

<sup>3</sup>In the Crow's Nest Pass, Canmore, Bankhead, the Coal Branch, Nordegg.

<sup>4</sup>There were a few Slovak farmers at Ghost Pine Creek and Cardston; a few Czech farmers from Prague, Oklahoma, at Prague; and Hungarian farmers from Hungary, the U.S. and Saskatchewan at Retlaw, Milk River, and Wrentham.

<sup>5</sup>W.J. Cousins, "History of the Crow's Nest Pass" (M.A., U. of A., 1952), p. 178; A.A. den Otter, "History of the Coal Branch" (M.A., U. of A., 1968), p. 44.

<sup>6</sup>Estonians at Foremost, Eckville, Big Valley; Bulgarians at Boian, Hairy Hill, and Ispas; Russians and Bulgarians were scattered among the Ukrainians.



But dislike of these Europeans was by no means universal, and while they might be considered "undesirable" culturally, most native Canadians regarded their presence as necessary for mining and construction industries.<sup>1</sup>

The initial hostility these groups aroused consisted almost entirely of a conventional ethnocentric reaction to their culture and appearance<sup>2</sup> and did not differ from the response to eastern Europeans before 1896. The response differed only in intensity, not in substance, from the response of Americans to these groups. Dislike of "foreigners" was revealed in the widespread use of opprobrious names: "Wops", "Dagos", "Bohunks", "Roundheads", etc., and native born and British workers called themselves "white men" to distinguish themselves from the southern and eastern Europeans they worked with.<sup>3</sup>

Various personal characteristics of the "Slavs" were considered to be objectionable by native Canadians. "Dago and Slav" immigration was condemned in the first issue of the Fernie newspapers, and the danger of forest fires was considered great in 1901 because of the carelessness of Slavs

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<sup>1</sup>C.H., March 8, 1899.

<sup>2</sup>Woodsworth, Strangers Within Our Gates, p. 131, 132, 143, was more discriminating. He stated that the Czechs were the most intelligent and progressive of the Slavs, while Slovaks were "distinctly a lower grade". Hungarians were "probably more progressive than the majority of the Slavs", and would eventually make good citizens.

<sup>3</sup>L.H., June 28, 1888, Sept. 21, 1918, Sept. 1, 1917. C.H., Nov. 22, 1900. E. Bradwin, in Bunkhouse Man (New York, 1928) a study of life in construction camps in Canada before World War I, even made the distinction between "white men" and "foreigners" in his chapter organization.



and Italians.<sup>1</sup> The immigrants' inability to speak English often increased safety hazards in the mines, leading to some feeling that British miners were preferable. The Fernie Free Press considered the shacks occupied by the "Russians" to be unfit for human habitation.<sup>2</sup> The "foreigners" were also thought to be less brave than English speaking miners. One report of the miners' escape from the Frank mine following the landslide maintained that only a few "foreigners" had given up<sup>3</sup> and reports of the mine disaster at Fernie noted that foreigners were absent from rescue parties.<sup>4</sup>

"Slavs" and Hungarians were considered foreigners par excellence: uncivilized, unruly and dangerous, and the stereotype of foreigners as criminals became widespread, arousing nativist hostility. They reportedly engaged in frequent fights, liquor violations, and Sabbath violations.

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<sup>1</sup>Cousins, "A History of the Crow's Nest Pass", p. 181. Although located in B.C., Fernie has been included in this discussion since it was part of the Crow's Nest Pass Region.

<sup>2</sup>Fernie Free Press (hereafter referred to as F.F.P.), April 30, 1909.

<sup>3</sup>Frank Paper, quoted in Cousins "Crows Nest Pass", p. 182.

<sup>4</sup>L.N., May 29, 1902.





While some of this behavior stemmed from divergent cultural patterns, most violation of law was a result of social disorganization which inevitably came with uprooting and the loss of traditional means of social control, particularly in the second generation. These symptoms of social disorganization were often interpreted as signs of inferiority.

The Mounted Police reported in 1906 that assaults were frequent occurrences at immigrant weddings and christenings. "These would not be much provided only the Anglo-Saxon method of settling their differences, (fists) were indulged in, but unfortunately, a number of these foreigners resort to other methods."<sup>1</sup> Another report attributed the large number of drunks and disorderlies to the enforced idleness among the "foreign element".<sup>2</sup> The issue of the criminality of "foreigners" was also raised by the Western Stock Growers Association who passed a resolution in their 1905 meeting complaining about the problems of cattle being killed along the railway tracks since "many of the section-men are illiterate foreigners who couldn't even read brands."<sup>3</sup>

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R.N.W.M.P. Reports, 1906, p. 52.

<sup>2</sup>But this did not cause a great deal of alarm to the R.N.W.M.P.: "Taking into consideration the large foreign and uneducated element in the district, and the number of new settlers who are not accustomed to our customs and ideas, I think that the amount of crime and disorder is far from excessive." (R.N.W.M.P. Reports, 1916, S.P. #28, p.166-169.) For other reports of crime among "ignorant...foreigners" see R.N.W.M.P. Reports, 1909, p. 67, and C.M. July 23, 1909; Oct. 8, 1909; F.F.P., April 16, 1909; L.H., May, 1908.

<sup>3</sup>Minute Book, 1905, p. 160 (At Glenbow Foundation.)



The stereotype of the foreigner as criminal was not, however, universally held. The Calgary Herald, while condemning the Galicians who participated in a knife fight in Calgary in July, 1910, noted that generally speaking, Calgary's foreign element was law abiding.<sup>1</sup> Frank Oliver, responsible as Minister of the Interior for the defence of Liberal immigration policy, attacked the assumption that the foreign born were mostly criminals. Oliver chided the opposition newspapers who attacked all foreigners when one of their number broke the law, but drew no conclusions about the undesirability of British immigration when an Englishman broke the law. There were good and bad among all people.<sup>2</sup>

The unruliness and criminality of foreigners was closely tied to fears of immigrant involvement in radical labor movements. But anti-radical nativism was never as important a force in Alberta as it was in the United States since labor strife in the province never reached the point where conservatives worried about the survival of the social order. Anti-radical sentiment which was expressed before World War I usually lacked nativist significance: Conservatives often linked radical ideas with a discontented lower class without invoking foreign influence, despite the image

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<sup>1</sup>C.H., July 13, 1910.

<sup>2</sup>E.B., July 15, 1907.



which had developed in the U.S. - nourished by the Haymarket incidents in Chicago - that immigrants were given over to communism, socialism, and anarchism. But the image of the immigrant as a lawless creature was well established, and it was not difficult to see the potential threat this presented when it was linked to labor unrest.

Ironically, while labor organizers regarded immigrants as docile, the general public became increasingly concerned about their lapses from docility. The Lethbridge News attributed labor unrest in Lethbridge in 1897 to Hungarian miners who were already considered undesirable because of their practice of sending money home to Europe.<sup>1</sup> When labor unrest began to spread into Alberta during the United Brotherhood of Railway Employees strike in 1903, Senator Lougheed of Calgary, who shared with other Conservatives of his day a fear of class conflict, introduced a bill in the Senate which was designed to curb alien radicals. The bill which he introduced proposed to amend the Criminal Code of 1892 to provide for the arrest and imprisonment of anyone "not being a British subject and not having been continuously domiciled and resident in Canada during one year before the commission of the act complained of, does, in Canada counsel, incite, urge or induce any strike

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<sup>1</sup>L.N., Aug. 10, 1897.



or lockout, or a rise or fall in wages, or the imposition of additional or differential conditions or terms of employment or impairing the exercise of industry, employment or labour."<sup>1</sup>

The Lethbridge News attacked those immigrants who were responsible for the mine violence associated with the prolonged Lethbridge coal strike of 1906<sup>2</sup> and the Coleman Miner argued that any agitator who was not a resident in the district where he advocated a strike should be arrested.<sup>3</sup>

An important radical organization in the Crow's Nest Pass which worried Conservatives was the Socialist party, which boasted of strong locals among the miners.<sup>4</sup> In 1909, the Socialists' candidate, O'Brien, was elected to the Alberta legislature. The Coleman Miner<sup>5</sup> was disturbed by the victory, and attributed it to illiterate "Dagos and Slavs", urging that only people who could read, write and speak English or French should be allowed to vote:

These people are herded to the polls like so many cattle and voted according to instructions from their leaders who are paid well for the service rendered.

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<sup>1</sup>Martin Robin, Radical Politics and Canadian Labour, (Kingston, 1968), p. 71. The bill did not go past second reading. The Medicine Hat Times, the only Alberta newspaper to comment on the bill, condemned it. (M.H.T., June 11, 1903.)

<sup>2</sup>L.N., April 7, 10, 1906.

<sup>3</sup>C.M., July 9, 1909.

<sup>4</sup>Martin Robin, "Radical Politics and Organized Labor in Canada" (Ph.D., University of Toronto, 1966), p. 154.

<sup>5</sup>C.M., March 26, 1909.





Anti-radical sentiment, though not important, did form part of the rationale for hostility to central and eastern European immigrants, but anti-Catholicism was seldom used as justification for opposition to these immigrants. Only a tiny minority of extremists saw Catholic immigrants as dangerous foreign agents in the national life. Logic could not be strained to the point of seeing Catholicism as "anti-Canadian" when Catholic religious rights were guaranteed in the B.N.A. Act and Canada's Prime Minister was a Catholic. Many educated liberals did see the Pope as a symbol of reaction and the authoritarian character of the Catholic church as contrary to the ideals of individual liberty, but their own values of religious tolerance prevented them from openly expressing anti-Catholic sentiments.

As in the two decades before 1900, anti-Catholic sentiment was focused on the separate school question, but such feeling was weak in Alberta and was confused with assimilationist and provincial rights sentiment. When Prime Minister Laurier introduced the autonomy bills to create the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan with provisions that the old dual school system of the North West Territories be re-instated, there was a considerable outpouring of anti-Catholic sentiment, but most of it came from Ontario, not Alberta.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ontario sent 448 petitions opposing the plan, while Alberta sent 12.



The Orange Order was anti-Catholic but its main purpose was social and its anti-Catholic expressions usually lacked the nativist anxieties characteristic of Ontario's Protestant Protective Association in the 1890's or of the Alberta and Saskatchewan Ku Klux Klan in the late 1920's and 1930's. The Order, which had grown to a membership of 3,000 by 1920 with 125 lodges, passed yearly resolutions condemning separate schools, but the argument used was that of the need for assimilation rather than the need to eliminate a Catholic menace. The weakness of anti-Catholicism in Alberta can readily be seen by the fact that while the Conservatives made sporadic attempts to link the Liberal party with the Catholic church, the Liberals believed they could benefit by proving that Conservatives were anti-Catholic.<sup>1</sup>

The intemperance of the immigrants also became an issue and aroused a number of churches and temperance groups which were pressing for prohibition, since alcohol was seen as one of the prime reasons for crime and poverty among the immigrants. A Presbyterian minister wrote that the spiritual needs of the immigrants could not be done justice until prohibition was enacted.<sup>2</sup> The W.C.T.U. was particularly anxious about the vote of "foreigners" in the prohibition

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<sup>1</sup>Red Deer News, Sept. 25, 1907; L.H., Sept. 30, 1908, Oct. 14, 1904.

<sup>2</sup>Proceedings, Presbyterian Assembly, 1915, p. 49.



referendum in 1915,<sup>1</sup> and the group distributed prohibition leaflets among Scandinavians, Poles, Germans, Russians, French, Chinese, and Ukrainians in Alberta. Anti-immigrant sentiment might have become more pervasive had the prohibition referendum failed since the mining areas where over half of the population was composed of central, southern and eastern Europeans, voted strongly against prohibition.

Another eastern European group, the gypsies, were considered more undesirable than any other settlers from Europe because of the threat their values posed to settled life. Attempts were made to have a group at High River deported. The Lethbridge Herald reported, "they are very dirty gypsies and were a nuisance to the community, alternately begging and telling fortunes."<sup>2</sup> They were reportedly "the same bunch that were mixed up in the abduction of a white girl at ... Ottawa...".

The inferior ranking of "foreigners" in Alberta is strikingly revealed in the rationalizations given by the Conservative party for their continual defeats in Alberta; the Liberal victories were not significant, nor decisive since they were achieved by securing the foreign vote. For example, R.B. Bennett attributed the defeat of the Conservatives in Alberta in the federal election of 1900 to the work done by the government officials among "Galicians

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<sup>1</sup>W.C.T.U. Report, 2nd annual convention (Medicine Hat, 1915), p. 60.

<sup>2</sup>L.H., Nov. 6, 1909.



and other foreign settlers",<sup>1</sup> and Conservative papers attributed the choice of Frank Oliver as Minister of the Interior in 1905 to the fact that he represented a "safe" constituency since it had a preponderance of the "foreign element".<sup>2</sup> The Calgary Herald attributed the Conservative defeat in the 1905 provincial election to "Galicians and Pollacks who were voted like cattle by the machine."<sup>3</sup>

The large majority of the immigrants did vote for the Liberal party since it had been the Liberals who had brought them to Canada and the Liberals who had helped to establish several foreign language papers in western Canada which influenced the formation of political attitudes. The protectionism, elitism, and nativism of the Conservatives also drove many immigrants into the Liberal ranks. The immigrants did not however play the crucial role in electing Liberal governments which the Conservatives attributed to them.

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1. E.B., Nov. 16, 1900. The Bulletin quoted a Galician in response: "Before the election when canvassed for our votes we were called gentlemen by the party which now calls us sheep. The same party also brought a large quantity of liquor to help influence our votes. We drank the liquor and then voted for Mr. Oliver." (E.B., Nov. 23, 1900.)

<sup>2</sup>Toronto Mail and Empire, quoted in E.B., April 17, 1905, Calgary Herald, quoted in E.B., April 28, 1905, and Didsbury Pioneer, quoted in E.B., April 17, 1905.

<sup>3</sup>Quoted in E.B., Nov. 17, 1905. In reply, the Bulletin pointed out that one of the two Conservative members, Hiebert of Rosebud, a Mennonite, secured his majority in those polls of his riding where his own nationality predominated. (E.B., Nov. 17, 1905.)





There were more clearly defined ethnic stereotypes of Italians and Jews than of most other European

groups.<sup>1</sup> The majority of the Italians in Alberta (2,139 in 1911 and 4,028 by 1921) were transitory, unskilled male laborers from southern Italy and the United States who came and went with the economic cycle. Most worked either as railroaders or as miners although there were a few Italian farmers in southern Alberta.<sup>2</sup> The Italians in the Crow's Nest Pass were a highly visible group not only because of their large numbers but because they lived together in separate residential areas.<sup>3</sup>

The Italians soon acquired a reputation as criminals since the press carried frequent reports of violence among Italians in Canada<sup>4</sup> and in Alberta.<sup>5</sup> C.A. Magrath pointed to the danger of Italian criminality<sup>6</sup> and the Macleod Gazette in an editorial combating the argument that public schools led to increased criminality

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<sup>1</sup>Our discussion of ethnic stereotypes is necessarily vague since ethnic stereotypes varied in terms of clarity, degree of complexity, degree of stability, and extent to which they enjoyed consensus, and it is extremely difficult to analyze stereotypes on the basis of historical records.

<sup>2</sup>At Grassy Lake, Turin, and Iron Springs.

<sup>3</sup>"Dago Town" in Coleman, and "Cement Town" in Blairmore.

<sup>4</sup>C.H., Feb. 27, 1903, June 5, 1904, June 23, 1906, Feb. 24, 1908; E.B., May 1, 1906, June 29, 1906, March 24, 1911; L.H., March 30, 1910.

<sup>5</sup>C.H., Sept. 17, 1903, Nov. 26, 1903; L.H., Dec. 31, 1910; F.F.P., July 22, 1910, R.N.W.M.P. Reports, 1916, S.P. #28, p. 168.

<sup>6</sup>Canada's Growth, p. 105.



asked if Canada's Italians were more law abiding than immigrants from England and the U.S.<sup>1</sup> One incident at Cochrane in 1906 almost led to an anti-Italian riot after a group of Italian railway workers attacked a man who had been insulting them. "The Italians with wild yells seemed suddenly bereft of their senses", the Mounties reported.<sup>2</sup> This aroused the residents of the town who hurried out with revolvers, rifles, and other weapons. Violence was averted when the Italians rushed back to the railway car for protection. The police arrested several and the Albertan reported that "it was a motley, disreputable and to some extent badly used up crowd of Italians that lined up at the barracks."<sup>3</sup>

Although Jews did not belong to the elite social groupings in the larger cities where most lived, they had a higher social status than other eastern Europeans because of their higher degree of education and their business skills which enabled them to move into higher status jobs. Jews from eastern Europe and the Jewish farm settlements in Saskatchewan began moving into Alberta shortly after the turn of the century. There were a few Jewish farmers,<sup>4</sup> but the

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<sup>1</sup>M.G., Nov. 2, 1905.

<sup>2</sup>R.N.W.M.P. Reports, 1906, S.P. #28, p. 21.

<sup>3</sup>C.A., Oct. 2, 1906.

<sup>4</sup>At Rumsey, there were 116 Jewish farmers in 1921; there were also Jewish farmers at Empress, Compeer and Alsask.



majority concentrated in commerce in the urban areas.<sup>1</sup>

A few Jewish merchants also established stores in smaller towns like Bassano, High River, and particularly in the towns like Vegreville in the predominantly Ukrainian bloc.

Owing to its small size,<sup>2</sup> Alberta's Jewish population was not highly visible, although the Calgary Herald carried a column on Jewish news for the Jewish community, and Jewish holidays and rituals were described in the papers.<sup>3</sup> Many native Canadians were sympathetic to the Jews, especially with news of continued persecution in Russia, and gave some funds to aid the Jews in Russia.<sup>4</sup>

Despite the fact that many eastern European and German immigrants nourished hostility toward Jewish middlemen,<sup>5</sup> anti-semitism was not a potent force; there was no violence towards Jews, and no organized anti-semitic movement developed. Jews were never mentioned during attacks on eastern European immigrants, and only a few Protestants worried about the influx of Jewish settlers.<sup>6</sup> But the

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<sup>1</sup>Census of Canada, 1921. (Calgary, 1,247 Jews; Edmonton, 821 ; Lethbridge, 108.)

<sup>2</sup>1,486 in 1911; 3,242 in 1921.

<sup>3</sup>C.H., Feb. 24, 1897, Feb. 15, 1908; C.A., April 24, 1911, Sept. 11, 1912.

<sup>4</sup>C.H., Dec. 7, 1905.

<sup>5</sup>See for example, the account of a Ukrainian play in which the devil carried a Jew off stage with a pitchfork "and cast him into hell with certitude and great vigour". Emily Murphy, Seeds of Pine (Toronto, 1914), p. 219.

<sup>6</sup>C.H., Feb. 21, 1912.



stereotype of the Jews as Shylock -- greedy and deceitful-- was entrenched in the minds of many North Americans, including some Albertans. The Banff Crag and Canyon reported that two Jews had been arrested for carrying home brew. The trunk of their car was reported to have "camouflaged frankincense to be poured upon the altar of the Hebrew God -- money -- in the guise of a ten gallon jug of home brew."<sup>1</sup> With increased mobility of Jews, social clubs excluded them, and Jews were excluded from intimate social relations.

Radicalism was not part of the Jewish image in Alberta at any time, since Jews in Alberta were not involved in radical activity, although the stereotype of Jew as radical became a center of focus for anti-semitic feelings in the U.S. and in Manitoba.<sup>2</sup> The image of the International Jewish plot, whether it were a Bolshevist plot as outlined in the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, or a Bolshevik and financial plot as described by Major Douglas and the Ku Klux Klan, did not emerge in Alberta until the early 30's when Albertans groped for an explanation to their economic problems.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>June 14, 1919.

<sup>2</sup>Higham, Strangers, p. 279; Woodsworth, Strangers, p. 158.

<sup>3</sup>The Social Crediter, an organ of the Social Credit Party, published several anti-semitic articles, particularly from the pen of Norman Jacques, a Social Credit M.P. The Ku Klux Klan, which had a small following in Alberta (about 5,000) combined the Shylock image with one of urban sin. Higham, Strangers, p. 286. But Catholics, not Jews, were the Klan's principal target.





While distaste for immigrant personal characteristics, and concern about radicalism, intemperance, and criminality all served as powerful supports of nativism, the most pervasive fear of conservatives and intellectuals was that southern and eastern Europeans would undermine Anglo-Saxon traditions of self-government because of their illiteracy and their inexperience with "free institutions". This fear was at the center of nativist thought since most Canadian opinion leaders (ranging from conservative imperialists like George Parkin and G.M. Grant to liberals like Goldwin Smith and including groups like the English religious cult of British Israel)<sup>1</sup> thought Canada's greatness was due in large part to its Anglo-Saxon derivation. The Anglo-Saxon tradition, which was also a dominant theme in British and American nationalist thought at this time, emphasized the Anglo-Saxon gift for political freedom and self-government and a special mission to spread its blessings.<sup>2</sup>

C.A. Magrath favored restrictions on central and eastern European immigration because of the threat these people posed to Anglo-Saxon institutions. In his book, Canada's Growth and Problems Affecting It, which was

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<sup>1</sup>The British Israelites brought to Canada the doctrine, based on Old Testament exegesis, that the Anglo-Saxons were descendants of the lost tribes of Israel, and were thus God's chosen people.

<sup>2</sup>Carl Berger, Sense of Power, (Toronto, 1970), p.117-188. Higham, Strangers, p. 95-96, 132-149, 165-175.



partially intended as anti-Liberal campaign propaganda, Magrath argued that many sections of southern and eastern Europe had been oppressed for years and as a result were "behind the march of civilization...many of whom cannot understand the meaning of liberty, which to them is licence, and who evidently have an intense hatred for the majesty of the law." While the problem could be solved through assimilation, the process would be slow: "It will take many years under the British constitution with our free institutions to translate such people into good, intelligent citizens."

One "Saxon" at Lacombe worried that large numbers of Galicians "who know nothing of the blessings of free institutions" would undermine "Anglo-Saxon civilization, with all that it implies in case of law and order, and capacity for self-government...In the rebound from the state of semi-serfdom in which they have always lived, liberty is apt to degenerate into licence."<sup>1</sup>

Linked closely with the fear that continental Europeans would undermine Anglo-Saxon institutions because of their lack of experience with self-government was the fear that lack of assimilation in rural immigrant colonies would undermine national solidarity. Prior to 1920, eastern European immigrants remained largely isolated socially and

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., Feb. 2, 1899.



culturally from native Canadians, British immigrants, and Americans. The fact that central and eastern European immigrants in mining areas and urban areas were residentially segregated, that they did not belong to the most prestigious churches and clubs nor to farm organizations<sup>1</sup>, and did not intermarry with native-Canadians<sup>2</sup> was partially due to the immigrant's own wishes to associate with people of his own background but was also a result of discrimination on the part of "Anglo-Saxons".<sup>3</sup> One researcher in the study "Social Conditions in Rural Communities in the Prairie Provinces" (sponsored by J.S. Woodsworth's Bureau of Social Research) noted that while it was natural for ethnic groups to congregate together, the prejudice of the "English" was at least as much responsible for this condition as the "clannishness" of the foreigners.<sup>4</sup> The maintenance of social distance was of

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<sup>1</sup>Woodsworth, "Ukrainian Rural Communities", p. 76, 79, reported that no Ukrainians in Mundare, Shandro, Chipman, or Lamont, belonged to farm organizations like the United Farmers of Alberta or the Grain Growers Association. The survey on the Ukrainian communities in Alberta was made by Wasyl Swystun, one of the founders of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and later of the Ukrainian Self-Reliance Association.

<sup>2</sup>In Alberta in 1921, of 315,000 Canadian born, only 28,853 had one Canadian or British parent and the other foreign born. (Census of Canada, 1921, Table 45, p.257.)

<sup>3</sup>For a vivid account of the ethnic social segregation which existed in the Crow's Nest Pass, see Magdalena Eggleston, Mountain Shadows, (Toronto, 1955).

<sup>4</sup>J.S. Woodsworth, "Social Conditions", (Winnipeg, 1917), p.38. For a discussion of exploitation and segregation of eastern Europeans in mining camps see Ely Culbertson's Strange Lives of One Man (Philadelphia, 1940) and E. Bradwin's Bunkhouse Man, (New York, 1928).



course, informal; no laws were passed prohibiting inter-marriage, but social sanctions against intermarriage with eastern Europeans were strong.<sup>1</sup>

Concentration in low status jobs was a result of both the immigrants' low level of education and discrimination by native Canadians. Ethnic and class stereotypes often functioned to assign different groups to the "proper" place in the social structure and to disparage those who would climb out of their place, although there was some degree of social mobility, especially for the children of immigrants. While negative stereotypes were used to justify exploitation, these stereotypes were not manufactured designedly for purposes of exploitation as some Marxists contend.

The social isolation and low status of eastern Europeans can clearly be perceived by the fact that usually the only time that these immigrants were mentioned by the newspapers prior to World War I (after their initial arrival, which did generate considerable newspaper comment), was at election time or if the immigrant got into trouble with the law. The society pages of the urban newspapers did not concern themselves with the social life of the immigrants. However, this was due not only to ethnic

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<sup>1</sup>This discussion of the place of the eastern Europeans in the stratification system applies equally well to Orientals, only Orientals occupied a lower status and were more segregated. See below, p.194.





differences but also to class differences (which generally followed ethnic lines) since working class 'Anglo-Saxons' did not read about themselves in the newspapers as often as middle-class Canadians and British immigrants.

The lack of social solidarity in western Canada resulting from this social stratification was of major concern to people from rural Ontario, the Maritimes and Britain, who were accustomed to a relatively homogeneous society in which there were few cultural differences. The study "Social Conditions in Rural Communities in Prairie Provinces" which included several reports from Albertans<sup>1</sup> lamented the lack of community solidarity. Woodsworth wrote that foreigners added to the divisive tendencies of competing business interests, competing churches, and competing political parties, and recommended that community councils be established to promote "togetherness" and that the government assist in community development programs. "Everywhere there are divisive tendencies: Needed - a unifying force!" Assimilation was needed since foreigners retarded local social development in communities where there were various ethnic groups, and retarded regional development

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<sup>1</sup>J.R. Boyle, Alberta's education minister, was a member of the Bureau of Social Research whose findings on the Ukrainian communities were published by Woodsworth. Kenneth McNaught, Prophet in Politics (Toronto, 1959), p. 73.



in areas where they were segregated.<sup>1</sup> Other citizens and social welfare groups and newspapers also became concerned about the assimilation question.<sup>2</sup>

c) Assimilation Ideology

In Canada and the United States, three theories of assimilation emerged in the discussion of how the immigrant could fit into society. "Anglo-conformity" demanded the renunciation of the immigrants' ancestral culture in favor of the behavior and values of the British-Canadians; the "melting pot" envisaged a biological merger of the native Canadians with the immigrant groups, and a blending of their culture into a new Canadian type; and "cultural pluralism" postulated the preservation of the communal life and portions of the culture of immigrant groups within the context of Canadian citizenship and political and economic integration into Canadian society.<sup>3</sup>

i) Anglo-Conformity

As in the period before 1896, the predominant ideology in Alberta was that of Anglo-conformity - assimilation of the immigrant to a British or Canadian norm.

The newspapers argued that no special privileges should be

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<sup>1</sup>J.S. Woodsworth, "Social Conditions", p. 35, 38.

<sup>2</sup>See below, p. 155-171.

<sup>3</sup>For a discussion of these ideologies in the U.S., see M.M. Gordon, Assimilation in American Life, (New York, 1964), chapters 4-6.



allowed groups like Doukhobors and Ukrainians, since this would deter assimilation, and prevent the formation of a homogeneous (i.e., British) nationality.<sup>1</sup> In opposing a request by Ukrainians that the constituencies in eastern Alberta be so arranged as to ensure the election of Ukrainians, the Edmonton Bulletin argued that no class or ethnic group should be granted special privileges. The immigrants "...came to Canada to become Canadians, to merge their national distinctions and characteristics with those of their neighbors of whatever origin and to join with them in the maintenance of Canadian institutions... on that understanding alone is the foreign born immigrant welcome to Canada."<sup>2</sup> As in the period before 1896, exceptions were usually not made for French Canadians.<sup>3</sup>

The arrival of large numbers of eastern and central European immigrants after 1896 aroused great concern about the possible undermining of Anglo-Saxon institutions, and Conservative politicians, Protestant church groups, social welfare organizations, school officials, patriotic organizations and newspapers called for assimilation

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., Oct. 24, 1898, Feb. 10, 1913. C.H., June 21, 1906.

<sup>2</sup>E.B., Feb. 10, 1913.

<sup>3</sup>E.J., Oct. 7, 11, 1905; L.H., July 10, 1916, March 14, 1912.



in order to maintain law and order and self-government. R.B. Bennett urged Canadian club members to become involved in Canadianization work, particularly in educating immigrant voters "so that a public issue may [not] be determined by five hundred Italians or two hundred Austrians or one hundred Galicians."<sup>1</sup>

The motivation behind assimilation campaigns stemmed not only from the desire to prevent the decay of British institutions: the Anglo-Saxon tradition itself as emphasized by British imperialists like Kipling and Joseph Chamberlain, demanded that Anglo-Saxons raise others to the Anglo-Saxon level, however difficult or even impossible their task might be.<sup>2</sup> This mission could be accomplished as easily with southern and eastern European immigrants in western Canada as it could with natives in India or Africa.

While there was concern over the difficulty of assimilation to Anglo-Saxon ideas, few moved on to conclude that immigrants were biologically incapable of assimilation, as in the United States where Anglo-Saxon racist ideas gave new impetus to nativism. Ideas of Anglo-Saxon supremacy which were common in English speaking Canada among both Britishers

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<sup>1</sup>The "Northwest Provinces and their Relation to Confederation", Proceedings of the Canadian Club of Toronto, (Toronto, 1912), p. 198.

<sup>2</sup>Carl Berger, Sense of Power, p. 186.





and descendants of British immigrants did not entail the biological taboos of race feeling.<sup>1</sup> The vague identification of British culture with "Anglo-Saxon" ancestry served to emphasize the antiquity and uniqueness of one's own culture rather than the menace of another "race". In other words, the values of the Anglo-Saxon tradition could be acquired. If Canadians had believed that Anglo-Saxon values could only be transmitted through heredity, there would have been a much greater reluctance to allow eastern, central and southern European immigrants to enter.

The few Albertans who gave any thought to the race issue concluded that the Anglo-Saxon tradition was not based on a pure Anglo-Saxon race. The Lethbridge News wrote that Canada and Britain had never been "purely Anglo-Saxon racially",<sup>2</sup> and confidently predicted that when Canada's diverse "racial" elements had all amalgamated, Canada would have its own distinct "Anglo-Saxon" culture.<sup>3</sup> Objecting to the people<sup>4</sup> who were saying that Britain, the U.S. and Canada should cooperate since they were all Anglo-Saxon

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<sup>1</sup>C.H., Aug. 13, 1898; L.H., April 22, 1918.

<sup>2</sup>L.N., March 20, 1906.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>For example Goldwin Smith in Canada, Thomas Carlyle and A.T. Mahon in the U.S. and Tennyson and Joseph Chamberlain in England. (Thomas F. Gossett, Race: The History of An Idea in America (Dallas, 1963), Chapter XIII.



nations, the Calgary Herald pointed out that these nations were not made up of pure "races", but were composed of various "ethnological" elements. The true basis of understanding was a common culture, not a common biological origin.<sup>1</sup> Emily Murphy's belief that Mormons would swing back from the extremes of polygamy to "bed-rock principles of the race" because they were Anglo-Saxons was explicitly racial Anglo-Saxon ideology, but she did not apply her racial ideas to non-Anglo-Saxon Europeans for nativist purposes.<sup>2</sup>

Albertans knew little or nothing of the racial pessimism of the American eugenicists or of Madison Grant who was teaching Americans that "racial" intermarriage led to the degeneration of the nation's "nordic" character, and to mongrelization.<sup>3</sup> In fact, the racists had few adherents in western Canada, even among those who were most worried about the effect of immigrants.<sup>4</sup> J.S. Woodsworth quoted from the works of Prescott Hall, a leading American immigration

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<sup>1</sup>C.H., Aug. 13, 1898.

<sup>2</sup>Canada Monthly, December 1911, p. 89.

<sup>3</sup>William Moore's The Clash--A Study of Nationalities, (Toronto, 1918, Chap. V) one of the few Canadian books which discussed the issue, condemned doctrines of racial superiority.

<sup>4</sup>The editor of the University Magazine, Andrew MacPhail, warned Canadians (as Grant warned Americans), that whenever two races mixed, the lower prevailed. (Quoted in Berger, Sense of Power, p. 151) But the Magazine did not have a wide circulation in western Canada.



restrictionist, but did not use Hall's eugenic arguments.<sup>1</sup> The immigrants might lower the standard of living and the cultural level, but there was little worry about the biological consequences. Attacks on radical foreigners were seldom transferred to attacks on radical races as they often were in the United States.

ii) Melting Pot

With the decreased immigration of eastern Europeans, and as previous immigrants proved their worth as pioneers, a few Canadians moved toward a more tolerant melting pot concept which moved beyond the idea that Canada's uniqueness lay in its Anglo-Saxon tradition. Out of the cultural and biological mingling of people of British and non-British origins would arise a new and greater type. The melting pot idea had been advocated in the U.S. by various intellectuals and politicians including Emerson, F.J. Turner, T. Roosevelt, and Woodrow Wilson, and received its classic statement in the drama "The Melting Pot" written by Israel Zangwill, an English Jew. The idea achieved wide popularity in the U.S. since it harmonized with, and articulated egalitarian, individualistic, and universalistic values which were deeply held.<sup>2</sup>

Although the "melting pot" concept was not acceptable to French-Canadians who wanted to maintain their own culture,

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<sup>1</sup>Higham, Strangers, p. 152; Woodsworth, Strangers, p. 199-201.

<sup>2</sup>The melting pot ideology emphasized the possibilities for social mobility of immigrants as much as it emphasized cultural conformity.



some western Canadians found it congenial and generally ignored the unique legal status of French-Canadians. Those who advocated the melting pot were not always consistent and often slipped back into the anglo-conformist stance. Ralph Connor's<sup>1</sup> novel The Foreigner was really a glorification of the anglo-conformity position, since it emphasized the role of the Protestant churches in "liberating" foreigners from their "primitive" state, but the book's preface succinctly expressed the melting pot ideology:

"Out of breeds diverse in traditions, in ideals, in speech and in manner of life, Saxon and Slav, Teuton, Celt and Gaul, one people is being made. The blood strains will mingle in the blood of a race greater than the greatest of them all."

Around 1910, the Alberta press began advocating the melting pot ideal. The Edmonton Journal, commenting on the census figures which showed that Alberta had the smallest percentage of Canadian born of any of the provinces wrote:

A great country can never be built up simply by natural increase. We have to take people from all parts of the civilized world and weld them into a strong nationhood. Those who talk about the advantage of keeping the pure British strain forget the outstanding feature of all British history, the constant admixture of different races. This is far from being a weakness. With the addition of each new racial element has come a new source of strength... 2

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<sup>1</sup>The pseudonym of Charles Gordon, a Presbyterian Minister in Winnipeg who had served in Alberta's mining camps during the 1890's.

<sup>2</sup>"Alberta the Melting Pot", E.J., July 2, 1913.





Consistency of ideology was not pronounced; one month later the Journal argued that while it was- as J.S. Woodsworth believed- folly to treat contemptuously the sources of national pride of newcomers, "there is no reason why British and Canadian sentiment should not develop rapidly with the coming to manhood of the second and third generation and every influence that promotes its growth should be encouraged."<sup>1</sup> The Lethbridge News also advocated a melting pot concept. Albertans need not be over anxious about the peculiarities of newcomers, "as long as they obey the laws and respect the rights of their neighbours."<sup>2</sup> Western provinces could not be expected to be exact copies of the "civilization of Ontario"; something new would emerge out of the various nationalities. Uniformity was not necessary, as the existence of French and British together in Canada had shown. "Diversity in customs and sentiments is quite compatible with sturdy Canadianism"; Canada would be a melting pot. Out of this blending and toleration there will arise a distinct nationality.<sup>3</sup>

There were few pessimists to say that assimilation

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<sup>1</sup>E.J., Aug. 16, 1913.

<sup>2</sup>L.N., April 15, 1910.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.



was not possible.<sup>1</sup> Whether they believed in anglo-conformity, or the melting pot, there was a confident faith among Albertans in the natural, easy melting of many peoples into one; where the French-Canadians fitted into the picture was not always clear. The fact that the French had a legitimate if not always secure position as a distinct cultural entity meant that at least some measure of diversity was usually taken for granted.

### iii) Cultural Pluralism

The federal government did not generally promote an assimilationist ideology. This was necessitated by the fact that French-Canadians as a charter group had been constitutionally guaranteed the right to maintain their religion, and federal politicians (who had to take into account attitudes in Quebec) could not enunciate an anglo-conformity assimilationist ideology which would not recognize the legitimacy of the survival of French-Canadians as a distinct

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<sup>1</sup>Carl Berger, Sense of Power, p. 149-150.

In 1924, John Blue wrote that the fears that foreign immigration would destroy Canadian laws and institutions had proved groundless. "There is enough Anglo-Saxon blood in Alberta to dilute the foreign blood and complete the process of assimilation to the mutual advantage of both elements." John Blue, Alberta Past and Present (Chicago, 1924), p. 210. Blue quoted census figures to show that the "ethnological groups are fusing to produce a rich and virile nationality in Alberta."



cultural group.<sup>1</sup> Laurier's rhetoric approached a cultural pluralist ideal. As he posted in a speech in Edmonton in 1905:

We do not anticipate, and we do not want, that any individuals should forget the land of their origin or their ancestors. Let them look to their past, but let them also look to their future; let them look to the land of their ancestors, but let them also look to the land of their children. 2

And also:

I have visited in England one of those models of Gothic architecture which the hand of genius, guided by an unerring faith, had moulded into a harmonious whole. This cathedral is made of marble, oak and granite. It is the image of the nation I would like to see Canada become. For here, I want the marble to remain the marble; granite to remain the granite; the oak to remain the oak; and out of all these elements I would build a nation great among the nations of the world. 3

But the provincial governments had control over education, and since the schools were the prime agent of assimilation, the western provinces could - and often did > act in opposition to the cultural pluralist ideal. Cultural pluralism was more likely to be expressed by a member of a

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<sup>1</sup>L.G. Thomas, "The Umbrella and the Mosaic: The French-English Presence and the Settlement of the Canadian Prairie West", Reflections of Western Historians, ed. by John A. Carroll, (Tuscon, Arizona, 1969), p. 135-152. A thorough examination of the Department of the Interior correspondence could reveal whether administrative procedure followed announced federal policy.

<sup>2</sup>Quoted in J.G. Macgregor, Edmonton, p. 135.

<sup>3</sup>Quoted in Slavs in Canada (Toronto, 1968), Vol. 2, p. 88.



minority group like Laurier; I can find no evidence of cultural pluralist sentiments in Alberta before 1920. >

### SCHOOLS AND ASSIMILATION

The focal point for the assimilationist sentiment of Protestant clergymen, patriotic organizations and businessmen was the school system.<sup>1</sup> They saw assimilation through education as the answer to all the "social problems" (i.e., crime, poverty, immorality, poor health standards, and alcoholism) of the immigrants and as necessary for both social integration and the preservation of a democracy which pre-supposed a literate electorate. The fear of what would happen if immigrants were not assimilated was probably a more pervasive motivation than the belief in the powers of education to liberate men from ignorance and poverty.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Three widely circulated books emphasized the public school as an agent of assimilation. See J.S. Woodsworth, Strangers Within Our Gates, (Toronto, 1909), p. 281-284, and "Social Conditions in Rural Communities in the Prairie Provinces", (Winnipeg, 1917), p. 139; J.T.M. Anderson, The Education of the New-Canadian, (London, 1918); and later, Robert England, The Central European Immigrant in Canada, (Toronto, 1929).

<sup>2</sup>Although some nativists were influential in the campaign for Canadianization, it must be remembered that many immigrant parents were equally anxious to have their children educated. For a discussion of this question in the U.S., see Timothy L. Smith, "Immigrant Social Aspirations and American Education, 1880-1939", American Quarterly, XXI, Fall, 1969.





With the rapid influx of eastern, central and southern European immigrants into western Canada after 1896, politicians in the Northwest Territories faced the question of what measures needed to be taken to encourage foreign communities to establish schools. Some favored the extension to other nationalities of the French language "primary course option" which had been initiated in 1892 to appease French-Canadian demands for a modicum of French language instruction.

F.W.G. Haultain, the Premier of the Territories, disagreed arguing that since the North-West was an "English-speaking country" instruction in languages other than English would have to be limited to after school hours.<sup>1</sup> Assimilation was the ultimate goal for Haultain but it did not have to be forced.

Bi-lingualism did not become the important issue in Alberta that it had been in Manitoba. Alberta's French-Catholic clergy and the Alberta French-Canadian Association did not want to repeat the controversy which had arisen over the Manitoba schools; consequently they did not press for greater bi-lingualism than already existed in the provision for a primary course in French and after-school instruction.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Lupul, "Relations", p. 656.

<sup>2</sup>C.A.R., 1913, p. 655.



Most English-speaking Albertans and some Scandinavians, Germans and Poles<sup>1</sup> opposed bi-lingualism. The Orange Order and the Conservative party attacked the arrangements which existed for instruction in French and demanded that "English and English alone should be the language of the schools" since --as the argument inevitably went--to give the French language rights would mean that all other nationalities would have to be allowed the same right.<sup>2</sup> In the 1915 session of the legislature, the Conservatives introduced a motion demanding that the government place itself in opposition to bi-lingualism.<sup>3</sup> Although the motion carried unanimously, the government did not move hastily or without regard to French-Catholic sentiment since the Liberals had substantial support in French ridings. But in 1916, the Department of Education introduced regulations which eliminated the primary course provision for French although they did not prevent French from being taught after school.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>C.B. Sissons, Bi-Lingual Schools in Canada (Toronto, 1917), p. 213.

<sup>2</sup>L.H., March 14, 1912, July 10, 1916. The fact that these two groups held identical positions is not surprising since membership overlapped to a considerable extent.

<sup>3</sup>C.A.R., 1915, p. 702. C.B. Sissons, Bi-Lingual Schools, p. 212. This motion was also intended to indicate opposition to bi-lingualism for Ukrainians. See below, p. 158-163.

<sup>4</sup>S.T. Rusak, "Relations in Education Between Bishop Legal and the Alberta Liberal Government, 1905-1920" (Unpublished M.Ed. Thesis, U. of A.), 1966.



The question of assimilation was viewed by some as a religious as well as a language issue. One of the arguments that some Conservatives used in the 1905 provincial election in their opposition to Catholic separate schools was that such schools prevented the growth of a "united commonwealth". Conservative candidates R.B. Bennett and W.A. Griesbach pointed to the American school system as the ideal for Canada since it was turning children from many nationalities into a "common citizenship"<sup>1</sup>. The Orange Order also urged the adoption of a national schools system.<sup>2</sup> The Orange Order's slogan "Equal rights for all and special privileges to none", was interpreted most often to mean that Catholics should not be allowed separate schools. The same slogan had been adopted by W.J. Bryan in the United States<sup>3</sup> and many Americans who had been influenced by populism used the slogan in their opposition to separate schools in Alberta.

Educators, politicians and clergy believed that the greatest need for assimilation in Alberta existed in the Ukrainian settlements east of Edmonton.<sup>4</sup> Rather than provide

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<sup>1</sup>E.J., Oct. 7 and 11, 1905.

<sup>2</sup>C.A.R., 1909, p. 234.

<sup>3</sup>Richard Hofstadter, The American Political Tradition (New York, 1948), p. 191.

<sup>4</sup>Woodsworth, "Ukrainian Rural Communities", p. 142. "The task imposed on the school is not a light one...If we add to this [sparse settlement, poor roads, poverty of settlers, poor class organization] an adult population with no knowledge of our language, or our institutional life, and with a natural desire for the conversation of their mother tongue,...some idea may be formed of what the common school in foreign settlements has to do."



grants to churches for the establishment of schools among the Ukrainians as some clergymen advocated, the provincial government decided to open schools itself.<sup>1</sup> The government opened numbers of schools in the Ukrainian settlements between the years 1906 and 1915 by 1912, about ninety schools had been organized and by 1914 there were approximately 130,<sup>2</sup> The government appointed R.F. Fletcher as Supervisor of Schools Among Foreigners.

Fletcher encountered problems in school attendance and in obtaining and keeping English-speaking teachers, often reluctant to live in predominantly Ukrainian communities. Irregular attendance of Ukrainian children was not usually because of disrespect for education, but resulted from the parents' need for the child's labor at home. An inspector of schools at Vegreville wrote, "In the majority of cases the parent desires the best for the children because he realizes the magnitude of his own shortcomings and handicaps."<sup>3</sup> But there was some resistance to school attendance from parents who feared the assimilating force of the public school.<sup>4</sup>

Schools were not limited to the primary level; in 1913 the government opened a residential English school for

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<sup>1</sup>A. Shortt, and A.G. Doughty, Canada and Its Provinces, (Toronto, 1914), Vol. 20, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup>Byrne, "Ukrainian Community", p.89; C.A.R., 1906, p. 478. See also R. Fletcher, "Education in Foreign Settlements", Seventh Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta 1914, p. 67.

<sup>3</sup>Quoted in C.H. Young, Ukrainian Canadians, (Toronto, 1931), p. 201.

<sup>4</sup>J. Skwarok, The Ukrainian Settlers in Canada and Their Schools (Edmonton, 1958), p. 54.





foreigners at Vegreville to teach Ukrainian immigrants between the ages of 16 and 28 the English language. Many of the Ukrainians who registered hoped to learn enough English to return as teachers to their own communities, but the immediate purpose of the school, as conceived by the education department, was to prepare the students for departmental examinations, so that the Ukrainian students might enter normal school.<sup>1</sup> There was some resistance to the school on the part of Ukrainians who felt that the school undermined their culture, and among some English speaking residents of Vegreville who were concerned that education "would increase immigrants' desire for liberty without the controls of British responsibility." Owing to this opposition the Vegreville school was closed in 1916.

Some Ukrainian Catholics feared that the loss of their language would lead to the loss of their whole culture, so they made attempts to establish a Ukrainian school for Ukrainian teachers in order to forestall the assimilation being promoted by public schools and Protestant missionaries. These efforts failed for lack of support from other Catholic organizations and from the government.<sup>2</sup> The government did make some concessions to the desire that Ukrainian be taught in public schools -- an English primer was translated into

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<sup>1</sup>Skwarok, Ukrainian Settlers, p. 66.

<sup>2</sup>Lupul, "Relations", p. 660 and Skwarok, Ibid, p. 31.



Ukrainian,<sup>1</sup> and the government also allowed Ukrainian teachers to teach the Ukrainian language after school hours.<sup>2</sup> These concessions, however, were not enough for Ukrainian nationalists, who did not want to see the language lost. Ukrainian teachers from Manitoba and Saskatchewan began coming to Alberta to teach in order to keep alive the Ukrainian language.

In response to this influx, the provincial government in 1913 introduced new regulations under which these Ukrainian teachers could not qualify and proceeded to remove the newcomers from their positions. Education Minister J.R. Boyle argued that these restrictions were necessary to avoid the situation which had developed in Manitoba where the "Galicians" were allowed to control their own schools. He declared "This is an English-speaking province, and every Alberta boy and girl should receive a sound English education."<sup>3</sup>

Fletcher visited the Ukrainian school districts and persuaded the school trustees to dismiss the unqualified Ukrainian teachers who held only Manitoba certificates. The schools eventually complied, but not without considerable resistance.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Skwarok, Ukrainian Settlers, p. 108.

<sup>2</sup>Skwarok, ibid, p. 116.

<sup>3</sup>E.B., August 20, 1913. See also C.A.R., 1914, p. 665.

<sup>4</sup>R.Fletcher, Annual Report, Alberta Department of Education, 1913, p.39 and following. Many parents refused to send their children to school or pay taxes.



While the Edmonton and Vegreville papers and Protestant missionaries campaigned in defense of Boyle's policies,<sup>1</sup> the Ukrainian press attacked Boyle.<sup>2</sup> However, the English language press response was hardly nativist with the Bulletin stating tolerantly that the "natural predilections" for the parents for teachers who could speak their own language was understandable and not to be condemned and arguing that eventually the training school at Vegreville would provide enough qualified English teachers. Boyle's action in dismissing the unqualified Ukrainian teachers and in printing school regulations in a Russian dialect other than Ukrainian was also endorsed by a public meeting of "500 Russians, Little Russians, and Poles",<sup>3</sup> who wanted to dissociate themselves from the Ukrainians and who resented the predominant position of the Ukrainians among eastern Europeans in Alberta.

The school question aroused national interest in the question of assimilating Alberta's Ukrainian population. Canadian periodical writers urged young Canadians to spend their summers helping to teach the Ukrainians "Canadian ideals and modes of living."<sup>4</sup> The assimilation which the schools helped

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., August 21, 1913: C.A.R., 1914, p. 665.

<sup>2</sup>Including the Novyny, April 2, 1914.

<sup>3</sup>Skwarok, Settlers, Chap. VII, C.A.R., 1914, p. 665.

<sup>4</sup>J.H. Hardy, "The Ruthenians in Alberta", Onward, Nov. 1, 1913.



promote also had an important impact on the development of more favorable attitudes toward Ukrainians.<sup>1</sup>

The discussion of the question of the school as an agent of assimilation was not, of course, limited to the schools' potential for assimilating Ukrainians since the question of assimilation was viewed in broader terms applying to all European and Oriental immigrants. Boyle, the education Minister, told foreign settlers:

You came into this country with a heavy handicap. You didn't know the language. What right have you to bring up your children with the same handicap? You have the right to educate your children in such a way that they will have the same opportunities in life as the children of the English-speaking people. 2

Boyle proudly proclaimed that Alberta had a compulsory education law and a one language school system.

Teachers were continually made aware of the importance of the public school as an assimilating agent. The Alberta teachers' convention annually emphasized the responsibility of the public schools in molding immigrants into Canadian citizens,<sup>3</sup> and voluntary organizations opened night classes for adult immigrants in the urban centers and mining camps.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See below, p.186.

<sup>2</sup>Quoted in C.A.R. 1915, p. 701.

<sup>3</sup>L.H., Jan. 25, 1908.

<sup>4</sup>L.H., May 27, 1908; Bow Island Review, May 1, 1914; Kate Foster, Our Canadian Mosaic (Toronto, 1926), p. 75. See also, J.T.M. Anderson, The Education of the New Canadian, (Toronto, 1918), p. 98.





With the coming of the war, many of the assimilation programs came to a halt because of lack of teaching personnel.<sup>1</sup>

### CHURCHES AND ASSIMILATION

While it was generally believed that the public schools could assimilate the immigrants' children, there was also concern among many middle-class "Anglo-Saxons"<sup>2</sup> about the immigrant himself. The clergy of the major Protestant denominations believed that the church could play an important part in the assimilation process which would alleviate the serious social problems facing the immigrants and prevent the deterioration of "British institutions". The motivation of the clergy was thus a combination of humanitarianism and nativism. Sympathy for the immigrant was combined with a fear of what might happen to the whole society if the immigrant were not assimilated.

The Protestant churches' humanitarian impulse to aid the immigrants' social conditions was undergirded with the social gospel. Many Protestant clergymen believed that the problems facing the immigrants were due to environmental or social conditions rather than individual failings of immigrants. The assimilation of the immigrant became part of

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<sup>1</sup>L.G. Thomas, The Liberal Party of Alberta, (Toronto, 1959), p. 155.

<sup>2</sup>Or to be more accurate, English-speaking people.



the program to establish a truly Christian society, and social gospellers pressed the crusade for assimilation--or immigration restriction when fears about the future overcame the confidence that the immigrant could be assimilated--in much the same way as they pressed for prohibition, women's rights and civic reform.

The major Protestant denominations in Canada (the Anglicans are the exception) established evangelization and Canadianization programs among central and northern European and Oriental immigrants in western Canada, with hopes both of attracting new members and facilitating assimilation. The two aspects of the program were viewed as inseparable -- immigrants would become Protestants and Canadians at the same time. The superintendent of the Presbyterian synod of the Northwest Territories defined the goal of the "home missions" as assimilating immigrants into "our social and national standards as well as our religious ideals" and clergymen urged "Canadianizing and Christianizing" the immigrants.<sup>1</sup> These home missions were regarded as the domestic counterpart to foreign missions. Why search foreign fields when local immigrants provided an ample challenge?<sup>2</sup>

The urgency of the campaign was evoked not only by the

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted in E.H. Oliver, His Dominion of Canada, (Toronto, 1932), p. 183.

<sup>2</sup>George F. Chipman, "The Refining Process", Canadian Magazine, October 1909, p. 548-554.



poverty of the immigrants, but also by the realization that missionary work would be most successful during the unstable period when the Greek and Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches had not yet re-established themselves among the uprooted immigrants. One Methodist missionary in Alberta hoped that Protestantism could "liberate" the immigrants from the "slavery" of the Greek and Roman churches.<sup>1</sup> But there was also fear that while turning from the Greek and Roman churches, the Ukrainians might turn to socialism. As a Protestant missionary in Alberta, C.H. Lawford wrote, "The great danger is that these people, in their efforts for freedom will drift into socialism..."<sup>2</sup> Missionaries believed that Protestantism could also save the Ukrainians from the "vices" of card playing, dancing, drinking and from religious superstition.<sup>3</sup>

The Methodist church in Alberta made the most concerted effort to convert immigrants. Interest of Albertans in this work was encouraged by the work and writing of J.S. Woodsworth. Woodsworth directed assimilation programs at the All People's Mission in Winnipeg, and wrote extensively on the poor social conditions among the immigrants in order to

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<sup>1</sup>Murray Wenstob, "The Work of the Methodist Church Among Settlers in Alberta up to 1914, with Special Reference to the Formation of New Congregations and Work Among the Ukrainian People", B.D., St. Stephens's College, U. of A. 1959, p. 112.

<sup>2</sup>J.S. Woodsworth, "Ukrainian Rural Communities", (unpublished manuscript, Winnipeg, 1917), p. 147.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid, p. 153.



gain support for his work and to arouse Canadians to an awareness of the need to assimilate immigrants.<sup>1</sup> In Strangers Within Our Gates, Woodsworth denounced indifference towards the immigrants and urged the adoption of programs to improve the living and working conditions and educational level of immigrants to prevent social stratification, social disintegration, political corruption, and the undermining of British institutions through insanity, intemperance, illiteracy, and crime. But, unlike most Canadians, Woodsworth did not see these signs of social disorganization as due to any inherent inferiority; he saw that they resulted in large measure from generational conflicts as the second generation became acculturated. He pointed to the difficult problems that the U.S. was having with assimilating European immigrants and warned that Canada's problem was even greater since in Canada there was a larger number of immigrants in proportion to the total population. But the problem was not considered to be hopeless. Even though he believed that some "undesirable" characteristics of different ethnic groups were genetically transmitted, he believed that these characteristics could be changed through a better social environment. In other words, since acquired characteristics could be genetically transmitted, there was no

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<sup>1</sup>There is some irony in the fact that Woodsworth was promoting assimilation to Canadian values at the same time that he was becoming increasingly disenchanted by the prevailing values of the society.





genetic problem which prevented assimilation. Churches and schools could play an important role in the assimilation of immigrants, and assimilation could also be facilitated by "scattering" the foreign communities among Canadian settlers.<sup>1</sup>

Many Methodists in Alberta shared Woodsworth's sentiments about the need for assimilation of immigrants. P.S. Parrott, an Alberta layman, urged the churches to establish night school programmes for immigrants.<sup>2</sup> Methodist missionaries worked among immigrants throughout Alberta, but they concentrated their efforts in the Ukrainian settlements where they established boarding schools and hospitals, and conducted English classes and sports activities as part of the evangelization process. The clergy made attempts to elicit lay support for these programs, and in some areas the Women's Missionary Society aided the missionaries.<sup>3</sup>

The Presbyterians were also active in "Home Mission" work among immigrants. Presbyterian missionaries established hospitals and schools among Ukrainians in northern Alberta and proselytized among Chinese, Belgian, Finnish, and French immigrants in other parts of the province.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Woodsworth, Strangers, p. 279.

<sup>2</sup>William H. Magney, "The Methodist Church and the National Gospel", The Bulletin of the United Church Archives, Toronto, 1968, p. 73.

<sup>3</sup>Woodsworth, "Ukrainian Rural Communities", p. 122.

<sup>4</sup>L.H., March 1, 1911; Digest of the Presbyterian Synod of Alberta, 1918, p. 12.



Less concerted than the Methodists and Presbyterians were the efforts of the Congregationalists who had gained 1000 converts by 1918 among German-Russian and Swedish immigrants, and the efforts of the Baptists who established missions among Germans, Ukrainians, Swedes, Norwegians, and Danes.<sup>1</sup>

The total number of converts was very small. While the failure of the campaign was partially due to the resistance of the Catholic and Orthodox clergy, the cultural chasm between central European immigrants and Canadian Protestants prevented any real communication, and the emphasis placed on anglo-conformity by some missionaries alienated immigrants who were not willing to shed their cultural heritage. While the Methodists and Presbyterians had some success among Canadian born Ukrainians who wanted to become assimilated, most Ukrainians feared the loss of their culture and resisted the missionaries' appeal.<sup>2</sup> Another factor limiting the success of these Home Missions was that not all Anglo-Saxon Protestant denominations were willing to allow immigrants into their churches. To use the school as an agent of assimilation was one thing, but to promote the entry of immigrants into the church was a different matter.

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<sup>1</sup>Congregational Year Book 1918-19, p. 126;  
McLaurin, Baptists in Western Canada (Calgary, 1939),  
p. 365-380.

<sup>2</sup>T.C. Byrne, "The Ukrainian Community", p. 48.



"Anglo-Saxon" prejudice was not always the cause of indifference towards the immigrants. Many Methodists and Anglicans believed that the energies of the church needed to be channelled into work among English-speaking settlers.<sup>1</sup> The serious problems involved in securing clergy during World War I also led to a lessening of the missionary work.

An array of voluntary welfare and patriotic organizations joined the churches and schools in the campaign for assimilation. The Y.M.C.A., I.O.D.E., National Council of Women, Canadian Girls in Training, Girl Guides, Big Brothers and Big Sisters Organizations, Reading Camp Association, and the Frontier College all attempted "Canadianization" work among the "foreigners", including the sponsoring of language classes and sports activities.<sup>2</sup> Many of those involved in this work were not hostile to the immigrants but saw their activities as fighting social problems and helping the immigrants to fit into Canadian society. But there was also a powerful nativistic sentiment behind many of these programs which arose from fear of the decay of British institutions. Among the volunteer workers, humanitarian sentiments did not always overcome an attitude of "Anglo-Saxon" superiority.

Unions were also faced with the task of integrating foreign miners into their ranks. The United Mine Workers were

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<sup>1</sup>Magney, "The Methodist Church", p. 77

<sup>2</sup>Kate Foster, Canadian Mosaic, pp. 85, 86.



in the forefront of the attempt to organize new immigrants.<sup>1</sup> District officials of the United Mine Workers of America appealed to their national organization to send organizers of Japanese, Slavic, and Italian descent to assist in adding immigrants of these nationalities to the union ranks<sup>2</sup> and asked the editor of the United Mine Workers Journal to print circulars and special notices in English, Slav, and Italian<sup>3</sup>. John Lewis wrote that it was the duty of the union to give the immigrants every opportunity of understanding the mission of the union.<sup>4</sup> The need for unionization was pressing since many mine owners deliberately used foreign labor to weaken the labor movement.<sup>5</sup>

#### IMMIGRATION RESTRICTION

Fears that southern and eastern Europeans would undermine British institutions because of their lack of experience with self-government combined with fears that lack of assimilation of immigrant colonies in rural areas would lead to an undermining of national solidarity, to produce a powerful argument in favor of restricting immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. The Conservative party in Canada

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<sup>1</sup>M.A. Jones, American Immigration (Chicago, 1960), p. 223.

<sup>2</sup>Report from District 18, United Mine Workers Journal, Vol. 15 #30, Nov. 24, 1904, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>Editorial, United Mine Workers Journal, Vol. 21, #50, April 27, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup>"President Lewis' Report" U.M.W., Proceedings as reported in United Mine Workers Journal, Vol. 21, #36, Jan. 20, 1910, p.1.

<sup>5</sup>Martin Robin, Radical Politics, p. 44.





provided the main vehicle for nativist sentiment since the Liberals benefited from the immigrant vote, and since Conservative values were less tolerant of cultural differences and left-wing radicalism.<sup>1</sup> The Liberal government also had to be more aware than did the Conservative opposition of international obligations, including fair treatment of the nationals of foreign countries. Conservative nativists pressed for stricter naturalization requirements, franchise restrictions, and immigration restriction.

Since Albertans' literary output before 1920 was understandably meagre, it is significant that one of the few books written was by a Conservative attacking the Liberals' immigration policy. C.A. Magrath attacked the bonus system and rejected the Liberal party's contention that Canada's prosperity was due to its immigration policy.<sup>2</sup> In order to assure a higher quality of immigrants, Magrath argued that a more rigorous medical and civil examination should be required, and only selected classes be allowed to enter. Quality rather than quantity should be emphasized. Canada should restrict immigration to ensure the entry of agriculturalists and to prevent the entry of the insane, and unassimilable immigrants.

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<sup>1</sup>Gad Horowitz's argument that Conservatives have been more tolerant than Liberals certainly has no basis in fact in the period before 1920. Canadian Labour in Politics (Toronto, 1968), p. 17. This difference between Conservatives and Liberals was paralleled in the United States by the difference between Republicans and Democrats: the Republican party provided the main vehicle of nativist sentiment, so the majority of new immigrants voted Democrat. On immigrant support for the Liberals because of Conservative nativism, see above, p. 134. Higham, Strangers, p. 98; Jones, American Immigration, Chapter 8; Robert Kelley, The Transatlantic Persuasion, (New York, 1969), Chapter 10.

<sup>2</sup>Magrath, Canada's Growth. (Ottawa, 1909), p. 33-34.



In 1910, Magrath was instrumental in the formation of an organization to promote British immigration and discourage immigration from "certain countries and districts of Europe".<sup>1</sup>

Like C.A. Magrath, Conservative newspapers in Alberta objected to the poverty and various cultural characteristics of the eastern European peasants and feared that unless they were assimilated they would undermine British institutions.

Could not British, Scandinavian, and German immigrants come instead of the "ignorant, servile classes of the European continent. ...whom it will take several generations to assimilate"?<sup>2</sup> As the Calgary Herald put it, "We have at present in the Canadian-northwest enough and more than enough foreign matter to be assimilated if we are to preserve a preponderating British tone."<sup>3</sup>

It is difficult to determine the impact that Magrath or Alberta's Conservative papers had on the precise formulation of Conservative party policy, but calls for immigration restrictions were included in the federal party platform. The 1905 platform called for the reform of the existing immigration system to assure a judicious choice of settlers, the

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<sup>1</sup>M.G., Nov. 19, 1910.

<sup>2</sup>L.N., Nov. 17, 1905; see also M.G., Nov. 23, 1900.

<sup>3</sup>C.H., July 19, 1900. For further discussion on the Conservative's anxieties about "Galicians" see W.A. Griesbach's memoirs, I Remember (Toronto, 1946). Griesbach, a prominent Edmonton Conservative and military officer, expressed concern about the impact of illiterate "Galicians" on political institutions, and their proneness to radicalism. Even after World War II, he was worried about their lack of assimilation and their assimilation to lower class standards. His remedy? Compulsory military service



repatriation of Canadians, and increased efficiency in the enforcement of the Alien Labor law<sup>1</sup>; and the 1903 platform called for a more careful selection of the sources from which immigration would be sought, more rigid inspection, and the abolition of the bonus system "except for the purpose of obtaining a special class of immigrants."<sup>2</sup>

The Conservatives did not, however, monopolize the movement for immigration restriction. For different reasons, labor unions, French-Canadian Liberals, Protestant clergymen and a few western Liberals like Frank Oliver objected to the entry of large numbers of eastern Europeans. Conservatives worried about the impact of immigrants on political institutions, the Protestant clergy worried about the social conditions among the immigrants, trade-unionists worried about the loss of their jobs, and French-Canadian nationalists worried that French Canada's position would be undermined by an increase in the size of English speaking Canada through immigration.<sup>3</sup> Even the Canadian Manufacturers Association warned that certain classes would have to be excluded:

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<sup>1</sup>C.A.R., 1905, p. 315.

<sup>2</sup>L.N., Nov. 17, 1908.

<sup>3</sup>H.A. Logan, *Trade Union in Canada* (Toronto, 1948), p. 486-487; Mason Wade, *French-Canadians*, (Toronto, 1968); J.S. Woodsworth, *Strangers*, p. 209, 278; Magney, "The National Church", p. 62.



The countries of Europe during the centuries that have passed have accumulated many impossibles, the off-shoots of society who are incapable of earning a living, the diseased in body and mind, the hereditary paupers. For these Canada has no place. 1

Canada should only seek as many immigrants as it could assimilate.<sup>2</sup>

Various business groups who benefited by continuing immigration, particularly the CPR, opposed restriction. The CPR sought groups of immigrants for its land east of Calgary since a community type of settlement could ensure the most permanent colonization of the company's irrigation bloc. As Hedges notes,

The early success of the CPR in location of such colonies on government land and the large amount of attention which American railways had given to this form of land settlement, turned the attention of the company to these people as likely colonists for its irrigable lands. 3

Those encouraged to settle on its irrigation land included not only British, Scandinavian-Americans and German-Americans but also German-Russians and Polish-Americans. The CPR also transported the Galicians to their destination in the west free of charge<sup>4</sup> and the Doukhobors to their destination at an

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<sup>1</sup>Industrial Canada, March, 1910.

<sup>2</sup>Industrial Canada, April, 1911.

<sup>3</sup>Hedges, Building, p. 206.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 132.





extremely low rate. Canadian Pacific officials defended the Doukhobors, Galicians and Mormons as good settlers.<sup>1</sup>

Immigration restriction developed slowly since Laurier and other leading Liberals were reluctant to override the "right of entry". When Clifford Sifton became Minister of the Interior in 1896, entry had been proscribed to three classes of persons: the diseased, the criminal and those likely to become public charges. These controls covered only entries by ocean ports. Although he encouraged immigration from the U.S., the British Isles, and continental Europe, Sifton's policy was not one of complete laissez-faire. Since his primary object was to promote the immigration of farmers and farm laborers to help settle the west he opposed immigration to urban areas. The government paid bonuses only to farmers, farm laborers, and female domestic servants, and passed the Alien Labor Act in 1897<sup>2</sup> to cut off the inflow of non-agricultural laborers (mostly Italians) from the

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<sup>1</sup>Woodcock, Doukhobors, p. 132; C.H., June 1, 1899. It is difficult to reconcile the Conservative party's opposition to immigration with the C.P.R.'s favorable attitude toward immigrants. Nor is it easy to understand why in the Shaughnessy-Borden correspondence in the Borden papers there is no discussion of the immigration question. The C.P.R. maintained ties with both parties, and it is likely that on this issue the Liberals adequately represented the C.P.R.

<sup>2</sup>V. Fowke, The National Policy and the Wheat Economy, (Toronto, 1957), p. 179. Timlin, "Canada's Immigration Policy", p. 519. The Alien Labor Act was also passed in retaliation for an extension to Canada by the American government of the provisions of their contract labor law which curbed the entry of railway construction workers.



United States. The law was intended to preserve employment opportunities in railroad building for permanent settlers.

Before 1905, Alberta Liberals were placed in an ambiguous situation in connection with the question of immigration restriction since the most influential Alberta Liberal, Frank Oliver, was one of the most vigorous critics of Sifton's policy of encouraging eastern Europeans to enter Canada. As he could not with impunity attack his own party, he blamed the railways' "monopolies" and their press for promoting a "politically unintelligent" class of immigrants so that they could control their votes.<sup>1</sup> Alberta Liberals made few attempts to defend the continental Europeans who arrived under the Liberal administration and before 1902 Frank Oliver used his anti-immigrant stand in an appeal for votes. Liberal campaign propaganda did emphasize that the tide of immigration had come under the Liberals, but minimized the impact of continental Europeans and stressed the preponderance of British and American immigrants. The Liberals countered the Conservative attack on the bonus system by arguing that the system had been established by the Conservatives and that the government had found it impossible to break up the system since bonuses were necessary in order to compete with other countries for immigrants.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., Oct. 15, 1900.

<sup>2</sup>Campaign pamphlet, "Liberal Government's Efforts to Settle the West", 1904, Canadiana Collection. University of Alberta.



Immigration restriction received new impetus with the appointment of Frank Oliver as Minister of the Interior in 1905. Oliver's own beliefs about the undesirability of immigrants from central Europe (in particular those who might go to urban areas), combined with the pressure from Conservatives, patriotic organizations, French-Canadian nationalists, labor organizations, and Protestant clergy, led to the introduction of restrictive legislation in the Immigration Acts of 1906 and 1910.<sup>1</sup>

The Immigration Act of 1906 which Oliver introduced contained a section which promised an expansion of discretion: Section 30 authorized the passing of Orders in Council "to prohibit the landing in Canada of any specified class of immigrants."<sup>2</sup> Other sections prohibited the admission of the sick, the insane, paupers, and those guilty of "moral turpitude."<sup>3</sup> The Act also included a section which provided for deportation of criminals and prohibited immigrants, authorized Orders in Council regulating the amount of money different classes of immigrants were required to have as a condition for entry and limited the bonus to specific classes.

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<sup>1</sup>These Acts also provided for the regulation of immigrant ships for the protection of immigrants.

<sup>2</sup>Revised Statutes of Canada, 1906, c. 93.

<sup>3</sup>Sections 25-29.



The government's policy was to remain that of attracting agricultural immigrants; Oliver stated that Canada did not want the class of immigrants that was crowding into the urban centers of the U.S.<sup>1</sup> Bonuses were limited to domestic servants and to those who signified their intention of farming in Canada. Thus the fact that the majority of Canadian immigrants were agriculturalists is one reason why nativism did not reach the intensity in Canada that it did in the U.S. where serious urban problems were associated with European immigration.

Under the new immigration act, the Department of the Interior discouraged "continental" European immigration. In May 1907, Oliver told the Calgary Albertan that the government was not pushing "continental" immigration at all, and that ships were loaded down with British immigrants. Oliver explained, "we do not feel called upon to go to any trouble to attract foreigners here as we formerly did before the tide of immigration from the British Isles and the United States set in..."<sup>2</sup>

The restrictions did not satisfy labor, Conservatives or French Canadian nationalists who continued to press for increased restrictions and an end to the bonus system. Oliver

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<sup>1</sup>House of Commons Debates, 1906, c. 1661.

<sup>2</sup>C.A., May 14, 1907, quoted in C.A.R. 1907, p. 289.





rejected the Conservative immigration critics' suggestion that the bonus system be discontinued and the immigration campaign be stopped, and the Liberals voted down such proposals<sup>1</sup> when the Conservatives pressed for the adoption of more stringent requirements based on the American model.<sup>2</sup> Oliver argued that if no inducements were offered, immigrants would go to the United States rather than Canada.<sup>3</sup>

Oliver introduced further restrictive measures in the Immigration Act of 1910 in an attempt to discourage immigration to urban areas, and to discourage immigration of eastern Europeans from the U.S. On May 9, 1910, the government passed an Order in Council (P.C. 924) requiring that each immigrant coming to Canada during the summer months should have, in addition to railway transportation, \$25 for each member of the family over 18 and \$12.50 for each child between 5 and 18. This sum was doubled during the winter months.<sup>4</sup> Farmers, domestics and certain relatives could be exempted. Another Order in Council required a passport. (P.C.#918) This last provision was put into effect only with regard to Italians or

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<sup>1</sup>C.H., April 6, 1906, April 24, 1908; See House of Commons Debates, 1908, c. 6145; E.B., April 4, 1910.

<sup>2</sup>Higham, Strangers, p. 112. The U.S. had passed a law in 1903 forbidding the admission of, and authorizing the deportation of, foreign proponents of anarchism.

<sup>3</sup>E.B., May 7, 1906.

<sup>4</sup>L.H., March 22, 1910.



other immigrants who were regarded as undesirable from the point of view of the Canadian government.<sup>1</sup> A statute was also passed restricting steamship companies and employment agencies in their immigration promotion, and the Act prohibited the landing in Canada of passengers brought to Canada by any transportation company which refused to comply with the Act. The Act also prohibited the landing of any immigrant who had come to Canada otherwise than by continuous journey from the country of which he was a native or naturalized citizen.

Oliver explained the objectives of the 1910 Act:

When the Act of 1906 was introduced it was framed with a view of dealing with immigrants from overseas. Although it applied to immigrants from across the line, it was especially framed to meet the other conditions. Now, it has become necessary to make similar provision for the exclusion of undesirables along the ...frontier between Canada and the United States...

Thus the Act had been amended to provide definitely for those arriving by rail and road.<sup>2</sup> These restrictions were not necessarily aimed at American immigrants but at Europeans who feared rejection at Quebec and hoped to elude observation by entering from the United States.<sup>3</sup> The Act also prohibited "for a stated period, or permanently," the landing

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<sup>1</sup>Simon Belkin, Through Narrow Gates, (Montreal, 1966). Jewish immigrants were not affected by this for some time.

<sup>2</sup>C.A.R. 1910, p. 383.

<sup>3</sup>See House of Commons Debates, 1910, c. 5549-5550.



of "immigrants belonging to any race deemed unsuited to the climate or requirements of Canada, or immigrants of any specified class, occupation or character." Provision was also made for deportation of those convicted of criminal offences, those who became public charges, and those guilty of "political offences" ("those advocating the overthrow by force of the government or assassination of any official of any government, or belonging to a secret society which attempted to control by force any resident of Canada ") Oliver proudly argued that with the introduction of this law Canada's immigration laws were more selective and restrictive than those imposed by any other country in the world, not excepting the U.S.<sup>1</sup> C.A. Magrath supported the bill because of its promise to keep out undesirables,<sup>2</sup> but the Alberta press made little comment on the changes.

Despite the introduction of restrictive legislation, immigration from "continental" Europe continued and Oliver found himself in the position of defending the Ukrainians and Doukhobors already in the country, and stressing the continued need for some agricultural immigration from "continental" Europe. By 1910 Oliver was telling the Canadian Club in Toronto that the immigrants would be assimilated to a Canadian

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<sup>1</sup>House of Commons Debates, 1911, Nov. 30, c. 608.

<sup>2</sup>Debates, 1910, c. 5516.



norm since British and American immigrants and native Canadians controlled the educational, financial, political, and social institutions throughout the west.<sup>1</sup>

The immigration policy enunciated in 1911 by Oliver's Conservative successor as Minister of the Interior, Robert Rogers, was to be a "vigorous policy" of immigration promotion. Oliver stated that as long as the government followed an aggressive policy in keeping with the principle of selective and restrictive immigration, the Liberals would support him.<sup>2</sup>

But by 1914, Oliver attacked the Conservatives with the same arguments that had been used to oppose the Liberals' immigration policy. The Conservative immigration policy was stressing numbers rather than quality, and by allowing in undesirables who congregated in urban slums, was moving away from the Liberals' restrictive policy. Oliver attributed the decline in American immigration to the continuation of continental European immigration and went on to reiterate the same objections to central Europeans that he had been using for thirty years.<sup>3</sup>

. . . it is necessary that the government should make provision to protect those racial characteristics, those ideals of social life and of government that we have at the present time, and which it is our ambition to perpetuate.

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<sup>1</sup>"Canadian Sentiment", Proceedings, Canadian Club of Toronto, 1910, p. 152.

<sup>2</sup>House of Commons Debates, Nov. 30, 1911, c. 614-615.

<sup>3</sup>House of Commons Debates, 1914, p. 1614, 1642.





Conservative hostility to immigrants necessarily decreased after the election of the Conservatives in 1911. While the exclusion of "undesirable" central and southern European immigrants by the Immigration Act of 1910 undoubtedly hastened this change in attitude, the Conservatives' responsibility for continued immigration to promote economic growth cannot be discounted as a cause in the lessening of hostility. Who could have guessed in 1900 that between 1910 and 1914 Conservative newspapers in Alberta would be virtually free of nativist sentiment despite the social dislocations caused by the depression of 1913?

Conservatives did channel nativist sentiment into tightening naturalization laws in order to limit the political power of immigrants (and incidentally of the Liberals) and to eliminate the political corruption which was undoubtedly often involved in the naturalization process. R.B. Bennett appealed to nationalistic organizations to give support to attempts to tighten Canada's naturalization laws:

Are you going to permit the destiny of Canada to be determined by men who have no love for our traditions, who know not of them, and have none of our reflected aspirations? <sup>1</sup>

Demands for the tightening of naturalization requirements also arose from many of the same sources as in the United States: businessmen looking for an alternative to immigration restriction

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<sup>1</sup>"The Northwest Provinces and their Relation to Confederation", Proceedings of the Canadian Club of Toronto, 1912, p. 198.



and municipal reformers anxious to purge civil life of corruption.<sup>1</sup>

In 1914 the Minister of Justice introduced the British Nationality Naturalization Bill which increased the waiting period for immigrants from three to five years (as stipulated in the 1902 naturalization law), and granted British, rather than Canadian citizenship. R.B. Bennett spoke in favor of the measure, arguing that no subject affected the domestic welfare of the people as much as this bill. According to Bennett, it was the universal view of businessmen, professional people and clergy who had considered the matter, that the residence period necessary to obtain citizenship was too limited. Immigrants had been able to obtain citizenship without going before a judge; federal authorities administered the oath to men who could not understand the oath, whose characters were vouched for by outside politicians who did not know them. Stricter naturalization laws were necessary in order to ensure that the immigrant understood the privileges and obligations of being a member of the British empire. Bennett pointed to the concern which Americans were expressing over the

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<sup>1</sup>Higham, Strangers, p. 97. In the late 1890's, tighter naturalization laws became a major political issue in Manitoba.



difficulties of assimilating their population, and argued that tighter naturalization laws would help in the assimilation process.<sup>1</sup> At the beginning of World War I, Bennett urged that naturalization be suspended until the end of the war.<sup>2</sup>

The Conservatives' growing tolerance toward central and eastern Europeans was paralleled by an increasing tolerance among most sectors of Alberta's society which was caused in part by the fact that immigration restriction laws had been introduced; but more significantly it was caused by the increasing acculturation of the immigrants as they began to interact with native Canadians in the economic and political spheres. Roads and railways helped break down the isolation of bloc settlements and integrate immigrants into a market economy. Contact with commercial institutions in the towns which were run predominantly by native Canadians also facilitated assimilation, and public schools not only promoted assimilation of the children of immigrants, but of the parents as well. In the mining camps and cities, labor unions did much to break down national differences.

The change in attitude toward the Ukrainians is most striking since they had been the main focus of anti-

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<sup>1</sup>House of Commons Debates, 1914, p. 4133-4137. For Borden's reply to Bennett's arguments see P.A.C. Borden Papers, 14a, 88924. "If the conditions in the West are such as you set forth I entirely agree that immediate reform is necessary."

<sup>2</sup>P.A.C., Borden Papers, 14a 88951. Bennett to Borden May 20, 1915. In 1914 the right to naturalization was suspended for all alien residents.



eastern European sentiment. One writer in the denominational press glowingly reported that despite the problems of poverty, ignorance, and superstition among the Ukrainians,

When we recount the history of the Ukrainian race in Canada, we realize that we are recounting the history of a people who have, under rather adverse circumstances, made good. 1

Another writer reported that the schools were "making the Ruthenians into Canadians", and a writer in a Methodist magazine recounted enthusiastically the example of one young Ukrainian who had been filled with the desire to better the conditions under which his parents had been living. "The Russian has begun to grasp Anglo-Saxon ideas."<sup>2</sup>

In 1915, Robert Fletcher, Alberta's supervisor of schools among "foreigners", wrote that a "marked development" was noticeable in the initiative of Ukrainians. They were becoming more self-reliant, and older people no longer held sway over younger Ukrainians, so "freedom of thought and action have made rapid strides among them." Ukrainians were using English more, taking a greater interest in public affairs, and many younger Ukrainians were attending high school and university<sup>3</sup>. Fletcher further noted favorably the Ukrainians' industry,

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<sup>1</sup>The Graphic, Aug. 9, 1915.

<sup>2</sup>The Graphic, April 4, 1914; Christian Guardian, May 24, 1916; Onward, April 26, 1919.

<sup>3</sup>Quoted in Woodsworth, "Ukrainian Rural Communities", p.143.





as manifest in good crops and the improvement of roads. The growing acceptance of the melting pot ideology is also evidence of a relaxation of attitudes.

"Colored Races"

(a) Negroes

Although individual Negroes were probably regarded as less desirable than eastern Europeans, hostility was less intense and less extensive since few Negroes came to Alberta. The influx of even small numbers of Negroes into Alberta caused some alarm since Albertans were aware of "racial" difficulties in the southern United States and feared that similar conditions might arise in Alberta if Negroes were allowed to enter. In 1901, Alberta had only twenty-seven Negroes. Immigration of Negro farmers and laborers had increased this number to 979 in 1911, with the major concentrations of Negroes located in Calgary and Edmonton and in farm settlements at Breton (south west of Edmonton), Wildwood (east of Edson), and Amber Valley (near Athabasca Landing). Although the first immigration of Negro farmers in 1908 attracted little attention, some resistance developed to their entry. The Edmonton Bulletin reported that an educated Negro had visited Edmonton's mayor and described plans to bring colored people to Alberta where they hoped to come under the freedom of Canadian laws which afforded better treatment to Negroes than did the United States.



Canadians could hardly object to this motivation, but Edmonton's mayor was disturbed by the Negro's explanation that the society he represented hoped to improve the moral condition of the newcomers. The district did not want immigrants in need of moral reform.<sup>1</sup>

Conservative M.P.'s raised the question of the desirability of Negro immigration in March, 1911, with the arrival of 165 Negroes at Athabasca. Reports had been carried in the press that the Negroes would be excluded. In answer to inquiries, Oliver did not state categorically whether they would be admitted or not, but replied that immigration regulations regarding undesirability were applied without any distinction of race, color or previous condition of servitude.<sup>2</sup> Two weeks later, a Conservative objected to Negro immigration, maintaining that a great deal of opposition had arisen in western Canada. "Would it not be preferable to preserve for the sons of Canada the lands they propose to give to niggers?"<sup>3</sup> Oliver replied that the Department of Interior could not take any action to exclude them until parliament had made provision, but discounted fears of any large organized immigration.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted in Coleman Miner, June 5, 1908.

<sup>2</sup>House of Commons, Debates, March 22, 1911, c. 5912

<sup>3</sup>House of Commons Debates, April 3, 1911, c.6523-6528.

<sup>4</sup>House of Commons Debates, April 3, 1911, c. 6523-6528.



Citizens' groups in Alberta sent resolutions to Oliver protesting the arrival of Negroes. The Edmonton chapters of the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire feared that settlement of Negroes would discourage white settlement in the vicinity of the Negro farms and depreciate land values. If these Negroes were welcomed, more would be induced to come. The women warned that "the problems likely to arise with the establishment of these people in our thinly populated province must be plain to all and the experience of the United States should warn us to take action before the situation becomes complicated and before the inevitable racial antipathies shall have sprung up." Fears of Negro sexual aggressiveness formed part of the objection:

We do not wish that the fair fame of western Canada should be sullied with the shadow of lynch law but we have no guarantee that our women will be safer in their scattered homesteads than white women in other countries with a Negro population. 1

The Edmonton Bulletin rationalized its opposition to Negro immigration. Those who did not favor a large influx of colored people into the Canadian West were not animated by hostility toward Negroes, nor were they "even lacking in a proper sympathy for the members of this unfortunate and outrageously used branch of the human family." The Bulletin editorial writer<sup>2</sup> was caught in the dilemma of attempting to justify

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<sup>1</sup>PAC, Laurier Papers, 184085, Edmonton I.O.D.E., to Oliver, March 31, 1911. The Edmonton Board of Trade also passed a resolution expressing opposition to this "undesirable influx".

<sup>2</sup>If the editorial was not written by Oliver, it undoubtedly reflected his views, since he maintained tight editorial control over the newspaper.



exclusion of Negroes without betraying his Liberal or British values. One editorial explained that some hostility stemmed from racial animosity along with concern over the possibility that Negroes would compete with whites. But the major fear was that conditions of violence would arise as they had in the southern United States. Despite the fact that the Negro was not altogether responsible for the conditions in the south, ("Doubtless for every Negro who has assaulted a white woman, a hundred Negro women have been outraged by white men") and that Negroes in Canada were law abiding, and that "race feeling" did not exist in Canada to any significant degree, and that it would be "cowardly" to draw a color line at the border, immigration restriction was necessary since "circumstances make right and wrong in such matters."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., May 30, 1911. The Bulletin spent so much time apologizing for its restrictionist ideas that reasons given for restriction were few.





Oliver's editorial was meant to justify an Order in Council to stop Negro immigration, which he was in the process of drafting. The Order in Council, which stipulated that Negroes be excluded for a period of one year, was considered by the cabinet, but was not passed.<sup>1</sup>

Immigration officials evidently were instructed to discourage the entry of Negroes; the Winnipeg agent reported that the influx of Negroes from the United States was likely to stop since discrimination had been partially removed and the dominion government was opposed to the movement.<sup>2</sup>

Immigration officials also explained that Negroes had "recognized" that the climate of western Canada was not suitable.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>For the draft of the Order in Council, see Trevor W. Sessing, "How They Kept Canada Almost Lily White", Saturday Night, September, 1970, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup>E.B., May 29, 1911.

<sup>3</sup>C.H., May 31, 1911.



Fears that a "racial problem" would arise in Alberta proved groundless. Caucasians accepted Negro neighbors and there is no evidence of discrimination or hostility towards them after the initial settlement period.<sup>1</sup> The major reason for lack of hostility was not the absence of feelings of white superiority, but rather that the Negroes settled in such small numbers.

The involvement of Negroes in the drug trade in western Canada did arouse some hostility. Emily Murphy was caught in the dilemma of wanting to correct social evils and yet promote tolerance toward ethnic groups which were viewed as the cause of the evil. In Black Candle, she wrote that while many Negroes were law-abiding and "estimable", many were "obstinately wicked", and earned their livelihood as drug pedlars. Mrs. Murphy warned ominously that the aim of the Negroes was like the Chinese -- to control white women. Thirty girls in Edmonton had been "ruined by black men". Sensational pictures of black men in bed with white girls taking drugs were calculated to shock the public into a greater concern over drug abuse. <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Interviews at Athabasca Landing, Jan., 1969.

<sup>2</sup>Emily Murphy, The Black Candle (Toronto, 1922), p. 17, 36, 150, 186, 189, 193, 196, 198, 303, 359.



(b) Chinese and Japanese

Throughout the period from 1896 to 1914, anti-Oriental sentiment in Alberta was more virulent than anti-eastern European or anti-Negro sentiment. Not only were attempts made to restrict Chinese immigration and place legal restrictions on the Chinese but anti-Chinese sentiment led in some cases to violence. Even though the Japanese in British Columbia were thought to pose an even greater threat than the Chinese because they were oriented to upward mobility, anti-Japanese sentiment in Alberta was not as virulent as anti-Chinese sentiment because of the smaller numbers of Japanese.<sup>1</sup>

Renewed agitation against Chinese immigration in British Columbia grew out of the objections that the Chinese could not be assimilated and that they provided unfair competition by accepting a lower standard of living. A sense of racial superiority was also involved. British Columbians struggled--without the aid of a systematic racist ideology--to preserve the province as "white man's country". Responding to these anti-Chinese pressures from British Columbia, Laurier and Sifton introduced a bill in June, 1900, providing for a head tax of \$100, but leaving unchanged the earlier limitation of one Chinese to every 50 tons of shipping.

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<sup>1</sup>Press attitudes towards Sikhs have not been discussed since I find no evidence of Sikhs in Alberta although the few Sikhs in British Columbia did provoke considerable hostility. Generally attitudes followed party lines, although the question was not of major concern to the Alberta newspapers. C.H., Oct. 4, 1906, Oct. 18, 1906.



Frank Oliver, a long time opponent of Chinese immigration, agreed with the attempt to restrict Chinese immigration, maintaining in the House of Commons that Canada needed a policy that would "protect labor against the degradation of unfair competition."<sup>1</sup> Oliver also supported the bill which Laurier introduced in 1903 to amend the Chinese Immigration Act of 1900 providing for a head tax of \$500 for all but a few specified classes. But the Lethbridge News condemned the inconsistency of those who insisted on being able to enter China, yet passed restrictive measures on Chinese entering Canada.<sup>2</sup>

Anti-Chinese sentiment grew in Alberta as Chinese moved out of British Columbia to find new employment but did not become intense because of the relatively small numbers, and because the large-scale influx of eastern Europeans drew attention away from the Chinese. The 219 Chinese in the Alberta provisional district in 1901 lived almost exclusively in Chinatowns in Calgary, Edmonton, Macleod and Lethbridge, which provided mutual assistance and protection and perpetuated their way of life.<sup>3</sup> The Chinese miners at Anthracite and

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted in E.B., April 4, 1902. Oliver's opposition to Oriental immigration continued at least through 1914 when he warned that Asiatic civilization might completely take over Canada if Oriental immigration was not prohibited. House of Commons Debates, March 2, 1914, c. 1220.

<sup>2</sup>L.N., June 23, 1900.

<sup>3</sup>Census of Canada 1901, p. 446-447. Table XIV.





Bankhead lived together in small shacks and worked above ground at the mine.<sup>1</sup> Despite the head tax the number of Chinese in Canada and Alberta increased through immigration, and by 1911 there were 1,787 Chinese in Alberta. Most lived in the urban areas and towns where they opened restaurants, laundries and market gardens. Those living in the urban areas lived together in Chinatowns, partly because of their desire to maintain their own culture and be with people most like themselves, and partly because of discrimination.

Chinatowns were pointed to as conclusive evidence of the social undesirability of the Chinese.<sup>2</sup> Reporters from the major urban dailies, seeking sensational reports of crime, visited their cities' Chinatowns and described the living conditions. The reaction of the reporters was partly one of curiosity, but also one of repulsion, and moral indignation over the gambling, opium smoking, congestion and "low" standard of living. The Lethbridge News report was a model of ethnocentrism:

In the front shop, just inside the door, ten or twelve repulsive looking Chinamen were lounging. . . Their hideous chattering ceased at the sight of a police uniform but the weird gramophone continued to grind out its awful noises.

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<sup>1</sup>Interview, James R. Anderson in S.R. Vallance, Collector, on history of Bankhead, Glenbow Institute Archives.

<sup>2</sup>The image of Chinatown as a center of vice had been firmly established in the western U.S. during the 19th century. Fears of white slavery were also encouraged by some movies and popular fiction which used the theme of the capture of white girls by Orientals. See Gunther Barth, Bitter Strength (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), and S.C. Miller, The Unwelcome Immigrant (Berkeley, 1969).

<sup>3</sup>L.N., Dec. 11, 1908.



According to the Calgary Herald, ". . .two fearful looking Mongolians lay stupidly on one of the benches. . .engaged in the preparation of opium."<sup>1</sup> The Edmonton Bulletin report was tolerantly patronizing, describing the "sweaty laundrymen (who) grinned at each other", and the opium dens, their "sacred holy of holies".<sup>2</sup>

Frequent reports of raids on Chinese gambling "joints"<sup>3</sup> arrests for trafficking in white slavery<sup>4</sup> and raids on opium dens<sup>5</sup> reinforced the notions of the undesirability of the Chinese and convinced many that the Chinese were an inferior "race". In the case of a gambling raid in Calgary, the magistrate acknowledged that Chinese cultural values were different, but no leniency would be given on this ground. Although the Chinese were "quiet" and inoffensive people, "they have many peculiarities which if allowed to flourish will result in centers of vice such as are found in many cities of the Pacific coast."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>C.H., Sept. 22, 1909.

<sup>2</sup>E.B., May 23, 1908.

<sup>3</sup>L.N., Oct. 14, 1908; L.N., Dec. 18, 1908; Calgary News Telegram June 24, 1913; E.B., Sept. 20, 1907 tells of a raid on a gambling "joint" in Red Deer's Chinatown. L.H., March 5, 1910 tells of a raid on a Chinese gambling "joint" in Fernie. The men were marched to jail with their queues tied together.

<sup>4</sup>C.H., March 2, 1899.

<sup>5</sup>C.H., March 12, 1912.

<sup>6</sup>C.A., June 19, 1913. A law had been passed in 1908 upon the instigation of W.L.M. King to suppress the opium traffic. Can. Statutes 7-8 Edw. VII, C.50. Strengthened in 1911 by 1-2 Geo. V. c.17. See R.M. Dawson, W.L.M. King (Toronto, 1958), p. 147.



The Edmonton Journal demanded that Chinese traffickers be told that in accepting Canadian hospitality, they would have to maintain Canadian ideals or get out.<sup>1</sup>

Indignation was greatest over rumors that Chinese were practicing white slavery. One "shocking tale of human depravity"<sup>2</sup> particularly outraged Lethbridge residents. The story of a white girl "held captive with hop and cocain" by her Chinese husband and sold as a prostitute to his countrymen,<sup>3</sup> led the judge to bar the public from the court since he feared for the safety of Lethbridge Chinese residents if the details of the case were given out.

News of secret societies and violent crimes among the Chinese also reinforced notions of undesirability.<sup>4</sup> Describing the murder in Blairmore of one Chinese by his brother, the Royal North West Mounted Police superintendent reported, "The small regard which some of these foreigners have for human life is something appalling."<sup>5</sup>

Anti-Chinese sentiment was encouraged among the

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted in Emily Murphy, The Black Candle, (Toronto, 1922), p. 109.

<sup>2</sup>L.N., Dec. 11, 1908.

<sup>3</sup>Prostitution was made necessary in Canada by the fact that the Chinese sojourners did not bring their wives with them since they intended to return to China once they had accumulated some money.

<sup>4</sup>L.N., Dec. 11, 1908.

<sup>5</sup>R.N.W.M.P. Reports, 1908 p.66.



working class<sup>1</sup> by contacts with the labor movement in British Columbia and by immigration of laborers from British Columbia and the United States who were well indoctrinated in anti-Orientalism. However, the cause of anti-Chinese sentiment among laborers was much the same ethnocentrism as among the middle-class whites, since the Chinese in Alberta were concentrated in service occupations and thus did not pose direct threats to the economic position of labor. But the laborers (and children of the middle class)<sup>2</sup> were more likely to give direct release to their hostility towards the Chinese while the middle-class people in urban areas were usually less directly aggressive and concentrated on attempts to keep the Chinese in subordinate positions in the economy, to segregate them residentially, and to deny them citizenship through disfranchisement. The widespread use of opprobrious names like "Chink" is also indicative of the low status of Chinese. Christian and British values did not rein anti-Chinese sentiment to the same degree

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<sup>1</sup>The working class was not large in Alberta since the economy was based primarily on agriculture, and farm owners outnumbered farm laborers. The coal miners in the mines along the Rockies and on the prairies of southern Alberta were more anti-Oriental than the agricultural laborers because they were more class conscious and more highly organized, but class consciousness in Alberta was not pronounced. Anti-Orientalism was blunted among the miners by the fact that half of them were Eastern European peasants who were too insecure in their own status to be worried about Orientals, and who were not as well versed as Anglo-Saxon workers in union doctrine, including anti-Oriental sentiment.

<sup>2</sup>Olds Gazette, June 15, 1917.





in the laboring class as it did among the middle class since these values were not as strongly held by the former.<sup>1</sup>

The transiency of mine and farm workers may also have had some impact on anti-Oriental sentiment since people without firm roots in a community are often more prone to deviant behavior.

The low standard of living of the Chinese laundrymen was not acceptable to many middle class whites, and attempts were made in Lethbridge and Calgary, the cities with the largest Chinese population, to confine the Chinese laundries to one area of the city while Macleod residents tried to pressure the Chinese into leaving town. Segregationists argued that Chinese would lower property values because of their sanitary practices.<sup>2</sup> With pressure from citizen's groups, city councils in Lethbridge and Calgary passed by-laws restricting laundries.<sup>3</sup> But efforts to completely exclude all Chinese from North Lethbridge failed.<sup>4</sup> In 1901 the Macleod Gazette advocated a boycott to get rid of the twenty "undesirable aliens" in town, and in 1906 the town council placed a \$100 tax on Chinese laundries to discourage Chinese entrepreneurs.<sup>5</sup> Despite anti-Oriental sentiment, newspapers cautioned against violence as a means of expelling the

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<sup>1</sup>The sympathy of the clergy for the Chinese may even have further alienated the working class from Protestant denominations.

<sup>2</sup>C.H., Oct. 17, 1898, March 2, 1899, June 11, 1903, May 4, 1905, May 11, 1905, Oct. 5, 1910, Oct. 6, 1910; C.A., Oct. 6, 1910; L.H., Jan. 10, 1905; L.N., Oct. 3, 6, 1905, Feb. 25, 1910.

<sup>3</sup>C.H., Oct. 6, 1910.

<sup>4</sup>L.N., June 4, 1910.

<sup>5</sup>L.H., May 17, 1906.



Chinese.<sup>1</sup>

Chinese sanitation practices continually served to exacerbate anti-Chinese sentiment, although interest in their sanitation practices was also undoubtedly symptom of general anti-Chinese feeling. The issue reached a peak in Lethbridge in 1902 when the Lethbridge News attacked methods allegedly used by Chinese gardeners in fertilizing their crops. The editor of the News quoted a letter from a physician who had investigated the causes of typhoid in Victoria, and reported that the Chinese not only had the "disgusting" practice of keeping pigs in their gardens, but also used urine for the fertilization and whitening of vegetables. The News thundered:

...in the name of decency, in the name of civilization, what white man or woman could think of eating vegetables 'freely sprinkled' and 'whitened' by the revoltingly filthy methods of these Chinese gardeners even should they be boiled for a century!...[for years] the residents of Lethbridge had been subjected to the unspeakable degradation of eating foods so defiled by Chinamen that a self respecting farmer would not offer it to his hogs. 2

The same month, Lethbridge and Cardston orators politely discussed the Chinese question, an interesting comment not only on hostility towards Chinese, but on the degree to which the Mormons in Cardston had been socially accepted. Several

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<sup>1</sup>C.H., Oct. 6, 1910.

<sup>2</sup>L.N., April 3, 1902.



prominent Lethbridge men (Ives, Atkinson, and Hardie) attacked the Chinese, while Cardston's elite (Laurie, Elton and Woolf) spoke against a resolution to prohibit the entry of Chinese immigrants into Canada. The objections expressed to Chinese immigrants were the same as those being used on the coast: they did not assimilate (in fact the American Negro was more desirable as a settler than were the Chinese, since the former assimilated); they had no aspirations except to accumulate money ("that their bones might be worshipped by their descendants"); they hindered progress; they displaced British workmen, and many of their cultural patterns were sordid. The Cardston debaters maintained that since there were undesirable classes among all immigrants it would be unfair to discriminate against the Chinese; that if it were not for the Chinese labor, white men and women would have to do menial jobs<sup>1</sup>; that it would be unfair to prevent their coming to Canada when British subjects were allowed in China; that discrimination against the Chinese would be contrary to British values of fair play, and that the Chinese could not be expected to be good citizens of the country if they were denied citizenship and the right to take up land. The fact that the Lethbridge team was judged to be the winner<sup>2</sup> probably speaks more for general attitudes toward the Chinese in Alberta than for the relative prowess of the debaters.

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<sup>1</sup>During periods of relatively full employment, the fact that Chinese filled low status jobs enhanced mobility opportunities of whites.

<sup>2</sup>L.N., April 17, 1902.



Hostility towards the Chinese in Lethbridge reached a high point on Christmas Day, 1907, when the insolence of a customer in the Columbia Restaurant in Lethbridge led to an attempt by the Chinese owner to evict him. Resistance led to added persuasion by the owner -- a blow on the head with a hammer. False rumors of the death of this man led to attacks on Chinese restaurants the next evening. A crowd which had been well-lubricated by Christmas cheer wrecked two restaurants and "roughed up a few Chinamen".<sup>1</sup> The Chinese appealed to the city for compensation and sued it after being informed by the City Solicitor that the city was not responsible for damages done by the mob.

The Chinese also became a political issue and anti-Chinese sentiment reached its peak at election time since politicians found it to be a useful vote getter. Both parties strained to be the most anti-Chinese.<sup>2</sup> In the 1908 federal election in the Macleod riding and in the 1909 provincial election in Lethbridge, Liberal and Conservative candidates<sup>3</sup> went to great lengths to prove that they were not getting the Chinese vote. John Herron stated that he would

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<sup>1</sup>L.H., Jan. 1, 1908.

<sup>2</sup>This had been true of parties in the western U.S. in the late 1800's. See Roger Daniels, The Politics of Prejudice, (Berkeley, 1962), p. 47.

<sup>3</sup>Macleod Advocate, Sept. 18, 1908; C.M., Sept. 25, 1908, Oct. 2, 1908.





rather be left home than be elected by Chinese.<sup>1</sup> The Liberal Lethbridge Herald denied a News report that the Liberal candidate Simmons had received the Chinese vote in the last election:

The Chinese vote did not go solid for Simmons then, as there was only one Chinaman who voted and he voted Conservative...Neither Mr. Buchanan nor any of his supporters tried to get the Chinese vote. In fact, both Mr. Simmons last fall, and Mr. Buchanan in this campaign, have requested their supporters to leave the Chinese vote strictly alone, as they did not want it. 2

The Herald accused the Conservatives of having naturalized the Chinese for the purpose of controlling their vote. In answer to one such charge, the court clerk in Macleod denied ever having naturalized any Chinese arguing that, as they did not appreciate the obligations of citizenship, they did not deserve to be naturalized.<sup>3</sup>

Disfranchisement of Chinese and Japanese in British Columbia in 1902 raised the question of their status in Alberta. The Calgary Herald condemned disfranchisement as inconsistent with British practice, but the Lethbridge Herald demanded that they be disfranchised, arguing that they had no right to compete with either white labor or with white votes. Corporations would

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<sup>1</sup>C.M., Sept. 18, 1908.

<sup>2</sup>L.H., March 20, 1909.

<sup>3</sup>L.H., Oct. 24, 1904.



control their vote to the detriment of "the people".<sup>1</sup> In tones reminiscent of the Conservative attack on Galician immigration and voting the Herald argued,

We do not want people without our ideas of civilization, without our ideals of government, without our aspirations as a province and a nation to bear any part in the election of our representatives. We have enough poor stuff in the voting class now. 2

Although the disfranchisement issue was also raised in other areas of the province,<sup>3</sup> the chorus favoring disfranchisement was not strong enough, nor the threat serious enough, for government officials to take any action, especially when such action would contradict liberal and Christian values of tolerance which were strongly held by leading members of the Liberal government.

Anti-Oriental sentiment among labor in Alberta also led to some support for the Conservative party's drive to restrict further Oriental immigration. During the 1908 federal election, Conservatives in British Columbia and in the southwest part of Alberta -particularly in Lethbridge and the Crow's Nest Pass where the labor vote was important- attempted to appeal to the labor vote by campaigning under a

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<sup>1</sup>C.H., Jan. 1, 1903, L.H., Oct. 17, 1907.

<sup>2</sup>L.H., Oct. 24, 1907.

<sup>3</sup>Fort Sask. Reporter, Oct. 10, 1907.



"white Canada" banner.<sup>1</sup> In the Macleod riding, the Coleman Miner stressed that John Herron, the Conservative candidate, would support Borden in his attempt to prevent Canada from being overrun by "Mongolians".

Is Canada to remain under the control of the white races or are we to see Canada overruled by the Mongolians who work for starvation wages on which a white man could not exist? 2

The Miner admonished the miners to vote for the Liberals if they wanted to be "driven from Canada by Chinese and Japanese labor".<sup>3</sup> This appeal had some effect, as Herron was elected with miner support. Although in Calgary the Conservative Premier Roblin of Manitoba argued that Canada should restrict Oriental immigration, the Oriental issue was not prominent outside of the Crow's Nest Pass. The Conservatives in Alberta did not have the same difficulty advocating anti-Chinese measures as those in British Columbia since the Conservative mine owners in Alberta did not benefit from Chinese labor as they did in British Columbia.

Although considerable resentment had built up in British Columbia among labor unions over the use of Chinese

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<sup>1</sup>F.F.P., Oct. 30, 1908.

<sup>2</sup>C.M., Sept. 11, 1908.

<sup>3</sup>C.M., Oct. 23, 1908; Sept. 11, 1908.



and Japanese strike-breakers, they had not been used extensively by companies in southern Alberta. Ten Japanese were used as strikebreakers during the Mechanics strike of the C.P.R. in Lethbridge in 1909<sup>1</sup>, but they were not used in the Crow's Nest Pass, nor around Banff. The unions were well organized in both areas, and would have made it very difficult for any strikebreakers.

While the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada was not to allow Orientals into its organizations until 1927,<sup>2</sup> District 18 of the United Mine Workers of America decided to allow Orientals to join their union in 1909, as an alternative to exclusion from Canada. If Orientals were allowed to enter the union, they could not be used as strikebreakers.<sup>3</sup> In introducing the resolution, the president of the union, Frank Sherman (who had been advocating such a step at least since 1906)<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>L.N., Aug. 14, 1908.

<sup>2</sup>An -all Japanese local was allowed to enter. It was not until the 1940's that a similar effort was made to unionize the Chinese. Ralph Ireland, "Some Effects of Oriental Immigration on Canadian Trade Union Ideology", American Journal of Economics and Social Affairs, January, 1960, p. 217-221.

<sup>3</sup>Bill Haywood had urged the W.F.M. in 1903 to organize oriental miners to stop them from acting as strikebreakers. Paul Phillips, No Power Greater, (Vancouver, 1967), p. 40.

<sup>4</sup>L.H., March 22, 1906.





expressed some anti-Oriental sentiment<sup>1</sup>, but pressed for the inclusion of Orientals in the union.

There was some resistance among the union membership over the entry of Orientals and the Fernie Free Press denounced the Union for passing the resolution. A letter writer in the Coleman Miner wondered what would happen if some of the delegates who had voted to allow the Chinese to join the union, were requested to cross-shift with those "chinks". "You will have to sleep in the same boarding houses with them, eat at the same tables, wash in the same wash houses with them, and their foreign diseases. They will be your companions... Even worse," the writer continued, the "captains of industry" could cross-shift a "miserable Chink or Jap" with a union man in order to get rid of him.<sup>2</sup>

Not all Albertans were hostile to the Chinese, although many of those who defended them still had ambivalent feelings toward them. In areas where there were few Chinese and where people had direct contact with individual Chinese, attitudes were generally more favorable.<sup>3</sup> The Chinese were appreciated

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<sup>1</sup>L.H., Feb. 5, 1909. Sherman attacked the system of contract labor whereby people would pay an agency to get a Chinese boy for them and then deduct the amount from the boy's wages.

<sup>2</sup>Coleman Miner, Feb, 1907.

<sup>3</sup>For example, in Medicine Hat, a group of residents were entertained by Quon Koy, the proprietor of the Empire Reform Association Restaurant (named after an organization promoting an "enlightened Orient"). The Medicine Hat News noted "Quon Koy has proved himself to be wide awake, public spirited, and progressive in his citizenship." M.H.N., Feb. 1, 1911. The Stettler Independent spoke of Rumsey's popular Chinaman, Sam. (August 20, 1914)



for their economic contributions, and both Christian values and notions of British "fair play" held in check any more serious outbreaks of anti-oriental sentiment. Many ranchers and farmers found their Chinese cooks to be indispensable, and many who had obtained them as cooks while bachelors retained them after they were married. Despite some hostility, the contribution of Chinese market gardeners to the development of irrigation was appreciated. The Chinese stores were havens of forbidden goodies for young children, and provided fireworks for festivals.<sup>1</sup> The newspapers noted with interest various Chinese holidays and parades.<sup>2</sup> There was usually no double standard of the law; unprovoked assaults on Chinamen were punished<sup>3</sup>, as were the guilty parties in the anti-Chinese riots.

The Chinese were not completely without friends in Alberta and a few journalists, clergymen and public officials publicly defended the Chinese. Although these defenders were not willing to ignore the "undesirable" characteristics of the Chinese, they believed that British and Christian values demanded that they be treated with "fair play and justice."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Reminiscences of H.S. Jack (John O. McHugh) p. 17, "Calgary's First Chinatown". (Glenbow)

<sup>2</sup>C.N.T., Feb. 20, 1912. For a report of a celebration of the Chinese New Year see L.N., Feb. 18, 1904.

<sup>3</sup>L.H., Dec. 31, 1909. For an unprovoked assault on Sam on Christmas Day, G.K. Kavalin of Lethbridge was fined \$25 and given one month's imprisonment.

<sup>4</sup>B.C.C., July 20, 1920. See also Nellie McClung, The Stream Runs Fast, (Toronto, 1946), p.166-169.



The Banff Crag and Canyon deplored the treatment of the Chinese who, the paper believed, were looked on in "the light of an ox or ass to be beaten and kicked whenever the inclination arises..." Vices like smoking and gambling were not limited to the Chinese, the paper asserted, and they performed essential economic tasks. Frequent raids on the home of a local Chinese resident, the paper continued, amounted to persecution.

Emily Murphy combined cosmopolitan with nativist sentiments in her attitude toward the Chinese, typifying the dilemma of the reformer who wanted to correct social evils and yet promote tolerance towards the ethnic groups which were viewed as the cause of the evil. Her exposé of Canada's drug problem, The Black Candle, which sold 2,000 copies<sup>1</sup>, attempted to promote tolerance toward the Chinese while at the same time emphasizing the serious threat that drugs posed to the morals of Canadian youth and the role the Chinese played in drug trafficking.<sup>2</sup> In discussing the entrapping of white girls for use as narcotics pedlars, she minimized the culpability of the Chinese. The responsibility, in her view, lay with the girls who did not keep to their "own reserves" and

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<sup>1</sup>Shirley Cook, "Canadian Narcotics Legislation, 1908-23", C.R.S.A., February, 1969, p. 38. The book enlarged on several of her articles which appeared in Macleans in 1920,

<sup>2</sup>Eighty persons had been deported from Alberta for drug offenses during 1921, and "there is not a liner clearing for the orient that does not carry some Chinese who have been officially declared as 'undesirable aliens'. Black Candle, p.197.



with politicians who protected opium rings as the price for the Oriental vote.<sup>1</sup> She decried the baiting of the "yellow races" and the belief that they exist only to serve the caucasian. She described the Chinese as a "friendly people" who "have a sense of humor that puts them on an easy footing with our folk as compared with the Hindu and others we might mention."<sup>2</sup> Chinese dope pedlars probably did not have as their aim the degradation of the white race; their motivation was greed. But at the same time, in order to frighten the public into an awareness of the drug problem, she wrote ominously that the white race lacked the "physical and moral stamina to protect itself, and that maybe the black and yellow races may yet obtain the ascendance." In fact, they would if narcotics were not strongly and speedily dealt with. But after raising the specter of an Oriental take-over she attempted to shift the blame to whites.

"Let us punish these foreign immigrants if they deserve it; let us exclude them from our country if our policy so impels but let us refrain from making them the eternal scapegoat for the sins of ourselves or of our children. It is not the Saxon way." 3

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid, p. 175

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, p. 187.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid, p. 239.





Reacting to the outcry for restriction of Chinese after the September 1907 riots in Vancouver, Mrs. Murphy defended the Chinese, pointing to their economic contribution and arguing that since Canada was so sparsely settled, it was wrong to keep out law-abiding workers. While acknowledging their "moral wrongs", she argued that their crime rate was below average. In reality, the reason for anti-oriental sentiment, she maintained, was that the Chinaman "is too smart for us". His industriousness, sobriety, frugality, intelligence, and strength made him a formidable competitor. In sum, the problem was the Chinaman's virtues rather than his vices. She also attacked the trade unionists who were anti-oriental since they were contradicting their own egalitarian socialist sentiments, and concluded with a plea that Canada become a haven for all people. What had happened to the country that once sang, "...her free latch string was never drawn in against the poorest of Adam's kin."<sup>1</sup>

Although Protestant ministers joined in the effort to prevent a massive Oriental "invasion", they avoided racist arguments for complete exclusion since they hoped the Chinese could be evangelized. The clergy generally condemned extreme anti-oriental sentiment, especially when it led to violence.

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., Letter to the Editor, Sept. 14, 1907.



For the clergy, the answer to the moral side of the "Chinese question" lay in evangelizing and Canadianizing the Chinese. Christianity both united the Chinese with the rest of the population by emphasizing their need for Christianity while at the same time distinguishing them from the rest of the population by emphasizing that they were not Christians. The Methodists and Presbyterians opened a Chinese mission in Calgary in 1901, later adding a Y.M.C.A. which sponsored recreation and English classes.<sup>1</sup> Missionary work in Edmonton centered around Westminster Church, where Methodists and Presbyterians jointly sponsored religious and English instruction for the Chinese. But the domestics and restaurant men who attended were more interested in learning English than learning about Christianity, and few became Christians.<sup>2</sup>

### Japanese

With the influx of Japanese laborers into British Columbia in greater numbers after 1899, the anti-Chinese movement became increasingly an anti-Oriental movement. Because of population pressure and the scarcity of land in Japan in the late 1800's, Japanese farmers had begun migrating to countries bordering on the Pacific. Those arriving in Canada went into

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<sup>1</sup>C.A., June 3, 1912; S.S. Osterhaut, Orientalism in Canada, (Toronto, 1929), p. 99.

<sup>2</sup>E.B., May 23, 1908.



farming, fishing, railroading, and mining in British Columbia, and by 1910 there were 4,738 Japanese immigrants in Canada.

As the Japanese began to compete with white workers, resentment built up against them. Since they were willing to accept a lower standard of living than white workers, they were willing to work for less and hence deprived some white workers of their jobs. The Japanese came to be regarded as more dangerous than the Chinese since the former were more aggressive and energetic. Some wanted them excluded because their "clannishness" allegedly made them unassimilable. Petitions flooded the federal government asking for some restriction of Japanese immigration. The government was, however, hamstrung by the Anglo-Japanese agreements which gave citizens of England and Japan the right to travel in each other's dominions or possessions.<sup>1</sup> The government disallowed several anti-Japanese acts the British Columbia legislature passed to restrict immigration and regulate labor after the Japanese consul general at Vancouver protested on the grounds that these acts violated Japanese treaty rights.

Canada's signing of the Anglo-Japanese treaty in 1907 in order to obtain greater trade benefits with Japan, further hampered attempts to restrict Japanese immigration. Politicians in B.C. attacked the government for not making any reservation with regard to Japanese immigration.

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<sup>1</sup>Young, Reid, and Carrothers, Japanese Canadians, (Toronto, 1948), p. 7-8.



The government answered that it was willing to rely on the good faith of the Japanese government to restrict emigration to British Columbia.<sup>1</sup> Japanese immigration was increasing, however, at what seemed to be an alarming rate, partly because Japanese who might have gone to the U.S. came to Canada: American laws had tightened and the Anglo-Japanese treaty made it appear that Canada would be willing to accept Japanese immigrants.

Albertans expressed sympathy with anti-Japanese sentiment. Frank Oliver sympathized with the desire of the British Columbia residents to restrict immigration, and to preserve British Columbia as a "white man's country", but maintained that restriction should be enacted in such a way as not to endanger trade relations between Japan and Canada. He expressed the opinion that labor competition was not the main reason for fear of the Japanese since work was plentiful and the Japanese were willing and able to do it, and concluded that the real fear stemmed from the general belief that an outside power was controlling the immigration of the Japanese for its own purposes.<sup>2</sup> The Albertan agreed with Oliver's viewpoint,<sup>3</sup> arguing that the problem would soon be solved since the Japanese

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<sup>1</sup>Cheng, Oriental Immigration in Canada, p. 117. In 1900, due partly to the opposition of Canadians, and partly to the fact that many Japanese were unable to find employment in British Columbia, the Japanese government undertook to restrict the emigration of its subjects to Canada.

<sup>2</sup>E.B., August 31, 1907.

<sup>3</sup>C.A., Sept. 4, 1907.





government was prepared to limit the flow of immigrants and Japanese coming from Hawaii could be excluded.<sup>1</sup>

The news of a large influx of Japanese and Hindus in the fall of 1907 led to anti-Oriental riots in Vancouver. The Asiatic Exclusion League had been formed in Vancouver in August, 1907, and with the help of labor agitators from Seattle,<sup>2</sup> aroused sentiment against the orientals who were supposedly ousting Canadians from their jobs. In September, the League organized a parade to protest the expected arrival the next day of hundreds of Japanese. The parade rapidly turned into an anti-Oriental riot. One thousand men ignored police and attacked the Chinese and Japanese districts.

Although clergymen and newspapers in British Columbia criticized the action of the mob, many politicians, newspapers, and labor organizations in Alberta expressed sympathy with their motives, if not their actions. R.B. Bennett told the people of British Columbia, "We must not allow our shores to be over-run by Asiatics and become dominated by an alien race. British Columbia must remain a white man's country..."<sup>3</sup>

The Alberta newspapers sympathized with the anti-Oriental

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<sup>1</sup>The Albertan also defended Oliver against attacks on his advocacy of Japanese restrictions by the Montreal Star. (C.A., quoted in E.B., Sept. 12, 1907.)

<sup>2</sup>See report of T.R.E. McInnes to Frank Oliver, P.A.C. Borden Papers OC196: 17089, Oct. 2, 1907. The League had a membership of 2,000 including merchants and professional people (about 15%).

<sup>3</sup>

C.A.R., 1907, p. 389.



sentiment but deplored the tactics used.<sup>1</sup> According to the Lethbridge Herald, clergy who argued against putting the bars down to the Japanese did not realize the seriousness of the condition: British Columbia might come under control of "yellow men".<sup>2</sup> Labor organizations in Alberta expressed solidarity with the anti-Oriental sentiment of British Columbia labor. The Edmonton Trades and Labor Congress passed a resolution in which they spoke of the social menace arising out of the importation of Orientals. A race problem might arise as it had in the southern U.S. The group declared its support for the attempt by the British Columbia labor organization to exclude Oriental labor.<sup>3</sup> A group of Morinville miners also sent a resolution to Oliver, stating that the time had arrived when the government must choose between an "Asiatic" or a Canadian British Columbia.

This anti-Oriental sentiment was not focused on the Orientals in Alberta, although it could not help but exacerbate sentiment toward them. But a Japanese threat in Alberta could hardly be taken seriously since by 1911 there were only 244 Japanese in Alberta.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>E.J., Sept. 10, 1917; Red Deer News, Sept. 25, 1907.

<sup>2</sup>L.H., Oct. 3, 1907; C.A., Sept. 12, 13, 21, 1907, ed.

<sup>3</sup>E.J., Sept. 10, 1907.

<sup>4</sup>The first significant number of Japanese had come in 1903 to work in the sugar beet fields around Raymond. When the factory closed in 1914, about 30 of these started farming in the Raymond area, while the rest moved to Lethbridge. 25 Japanese railroaders were brought to the Macleod area in 1907, and later went to the mines at Hardieville and Diamond while a few Japanese laborers were scattered in Edmonton, Calgary, and Macleod. (Interviews, George Higa, Lethbridge; Leslie Kawamura, Raymond.)



The anti-Oriental riots embarrassed a Canadian government wanting to maintain good relations with Japan. The postmaster-general, Rodolphe Lemieux, worked out a "gentleman's agreement" with Japan (similar to the agreement that the U.S. had secured) which limited Japanese immigration to wives, domestic workers, and contract laborers brought in by Japanese farmers. The Canadian government further restricted Japanese immigration in January, 1908 by passing an Order in Council which specified that immigrants entering Canada must come by continuous voyage from the land of their birth, thus cutting off the flow of Japanese from Hawaii.<sup>1</sup>

But no amount of official reassurance would quiet the suspicion that the Japanese were evading their obligation to restrict immigration. Conservatives attacked the Liberal government for their policy, arguing that more stringent restrictions should be applied to the Japanese. John Herron warned "...within seven or eight years the Asiatic population would predominate in British Columbia."<sup>2</sup> The Calgary Herald argued that the gentlemen's agreement was ineffectual: "Canada today, owing to the blundering or design of the government at Ottawa can do nothing to prevent the wholesale influx of Japanese."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cheng, Orientalism, p. 124.

<sup>2</sup>House of Commons Debates, Jan. 28, 1908, 2141-2144.

<sup>3</sup>C.H., Jan. 6, Feb. 3, 1908.



The Liberal press dismissed these charges, the Bulletin arguing that the Japanese were not plotting to take over Canada, and they would honor their agreement.<sup>1</sup> The Lethbridge Herald noted that, "There has been a wonderful falling off in the number of Japs coming to Canada and this has come about solely through peaceable arrangement made with the Japanese government by a representative of the Liberal government."

Since the question of Japanese immigration was firmly in the minds of Albertans in January, 1907, an announcement at this time that a colony of Japanese farmers would settle at Gleichen was most untimely, and considerable opposition developed. A Japanese businessman, B.R. Nagatany, who had been educated at Queen's and had become a Methodist, announced a project to bring 50 Japanese farmers to settle on Canadian Pacific land east of Calgary to grow sugar beets and establish a sugar factory. The Bulletin tried to check opposition by noting Nagatany's educational background, and his proposal to establish a Christian mission and English school, and quoted Nagatany's assurances that his people were to become Canadian citizens who would "fight to uphold Canadian honor."<sup>2</sup>

Immediate opposition developed to the plan. John Herron, who by now had acquired firm anti-Oriental credentials, opposed

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., Jan. 3, 1908, Jan. 14, 1908.

<sup>2</sup>E.B., Jan. 1908.





the settlement, using arguments similar to those which had been used against Mormons and Ukrainians. "I never did and never will favor any class of people coming into our country and settling in bulk as a colony...Japanese will close up our other sugar factories and drive out the whites..."<sup>1</sup> A resident of British Columbia warned Alberta residents of the imminent danger:

"As one who rubbed elbows with Japs, and studied their customs for the past five years, I feel it my duty to warn the people of Alberta of the hell into which they will be precipitated should a pack of Japan's cast-offs be deposited in the sunny province.

This writer went on to predict that unemployment and riots would result, and warned that the Japanese were contemptuous of whites and would not assimilate.<sup>2</sup>

Sensing the economic advantages of Japanese settlement, the Calgary Herald defended plans for the colony. While maintaining that they were in sympathy with those who wanted to keep Canada a "white man's country", the Herald argued that central Alberta had the soil and climate for growing sugar beets and labor was needed.

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<sup>1</sup>House of Commons Debates, Jan. 28, 1908.

<sup>2</sup>C.H., January 7, 1908.



We have millions of acres of fertile land in Alberta which might lie untilled till Doomsday if we undertook to taboo on account of their color, men, women, and children who are willing to come in and perform the hard and menial work.

The cry of "Canada for the Canadians" would be credible if God had not created other people in the world besides Canadians. At any rate, there was plenty of room in Canada for them, and if they were not allowed to come peacefully they would come by force.<sup>1</sup> Conservatives maintained in the House of Commons that the colony in Alberta would violate the gentlemen's agreement,<sup>2</sup> but the Liberals denied this allegation.

In response to inquiry by the Japanese promoter as to whether the government would approve of the settlement, Oliver replied that if the arrangement was in the nature of contract labor, the government could not grant approval, but that provision was made for a certain number of Japanese farm laborers in the agreement with Japan. Oliver pointed out that an Order in Council prevented the landing of Japanese who did not come directly from Japan since there was some question as to the place where the proposed colony was coming from. Eventually, a few Japanese farmers settled in the Gleichen area.

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<sup>1</sup>C.H., Feb. 1, 1908.

<sup>2</sup>C.H., Jan. 31, 1908.



CHAPTER III      1914-1920

Introduction

World War I called forth the most strenuous nationalism and the most pervasive nativism in western Canada's history as anti-German sentiment reached a fever pitch. The Germans, who formerly had been considered among Alberta's most desirable citizens, now became the most undesirable. Many were "guilty" of committing nationalism's worst sin -- disloyalty. The war also raised questions about the loyalty of central and eastern European immigrants from the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Some Conservatives linked labor unrest with German influence, and, after the Russian Revolution, with Bolsheviks.

Germans

Although there was an outcry at the beginning of the war for internment of Germans, the government and the press at first opposed severe restrictive measures for Germans and Austrians. The government assured the residents of German and Austro-Hungarian origin that it had no intention of depriving them of "their freedom to hold property or to carry



on business,"<sup>1</sup> as long as they pursued their ordinary vocations.

The Calgary Herald, Medicine Hat Times, Medicine Hat Daily News and Edmonton Bulletin all expressed concern about the loyalty of Germans since there were concentrations of Germans in or near each city, but they reassured the public that Germans and Austrians in Canada were law abiding and would help the war effort.<sup>2</sup> The Times urged courtesy and respect for German-Canadians and warned that Canadians must not let their abhorrence for the Kaiser blind them to the worth of their German-born countrymen.<sup>3</sup>

The war placed Alberta's German language press in a precarious position. Der Deutsch Kanadier, which was published in Calgary and Edmonton, ceased publication with the coming of the war. The Calgary newspaper terminated in December, 1914, while the Edmonton paper, which had been intensely pro-Austrian when Austria declared war on Serbia, discontinued in August 1914 after its loss of advertising put it in a critical financial position.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Notice to Enemy Aliens,

<sup>2</sup>C.H., Aug. 6, 1914; M.H.T., Aug. 17, 1914; E.B., Aug. 31, Nov. 4, 1914; L.H., Nov. 10, 1914.

<sup>3</sup>M.H.T. Aug. 17, 1914.

<sup>4</sup>Aug. 13, 1914.





Support for the German cause by Alberta's largest German language newspaper, the Alberta Herald, could not be tolerated, and Conservative newspapers and politicians demanded that it be prohibited. In October, 1914, the Edmonton Journal protested in a number of editorials against the tone of the Herald articles and R.B. Bennett denounced the provincial government for allowing the continued publication of the Herald and the printing of what he called sedition and treason.<sup>1</sup> The Edmonton Bulletin disagreed, charging that the Conservative motivation stemmed from an attempt to win political support.

The Conservative demands for suppression soon escalated. Two Conservative M.L.A.'s, T.M. Tweedie and A.F. Ewing, moved in the 1914 session of the legislature that immediate steps be taken by the province to suppress the Alberta Herald. This motion was rejected by a party vote of 31 to 18.<sup>2</sup> Premier Sifton refused to take action, arguing that such action was the responsibility of the federal government. Conservative newspapers attacked Sifton's position, attributing the Liberal government's stand to its

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<sup>1</sup>See report of his speech C.H., Oct. 21, 1914.

<sup>2</sup>C.A.R., 1914, p. 664 and C.H., Oct. 23, 1914. Tweedie protested that he had the "utmost sympathy for newcomers from countries now at war with us if they cannot help a feeling of fealty to their country. They have not yet been assimilated... But my sympathy does not extend to the open preaching of sedition." The Calgary Herald observed that 31 Liberal members voted solidly to let treason and sedition run rampant. (See also their editorial.)



reliance on the German vote.<sup>1</sup> Eventually the federal government announced that it would act. But when the government did not move immediately, the Calgary Herald again pressed for restrictive measures: "[the] tone of the publication and its object is to give comfort and aid to the enemies of Great Britain."<sup>2</sup> The federal government was contemplating such action in July, 1915, but by then the newspaper had ceased publication.<sup>3</sup>

During the early stages of the war, German clubs and schools and German Lutheran churches came under pressure to close. The Calgary school board decided to terminate the teaching of "German" (i.e., Lutheran) religion in the Riverside school, and the Department of Education closed the Lutheran school at Stony Plain and the German school at Wetaskiwin.<sup>4</sup> Louise McKinney, president of Alberta's W.C.T.U. and a feminist, urged in the legislature that all instruction in the remaining Lutheran schools be in English.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>C.H., ed. Oct. 24, 1914.

<sup>2</sup>C.H., ed. June 5, 1915.

<sup>3</sup>J.A. Boudreau, "Enemy Aliens in Western Canada," Alberta Historical Review, (Winter, 1964), p. 4. In 1915, Borden authorized the post office to stop the entry of German-American newspapers and pamphlets. C.A.R., 1915, p. 36.

<sup>4</sup>Albert H. Schwermann, "The Life and Times of Emil E. Eberhardt, Pioneer Missionary of Alberta and B.C.," Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly, January 1962, p. 144.

<sup>5</sup>E.B., April 4, 1918.



The police advised some German Lutheran congregations to discontinue their meetings in order to prevent violence, and German clubs in Calgary and Edmonton disbanded because of their fear of reprisals. Residents of Carlstadt, Alberta, changed the town's name to Alderson.<sup>1</sup>

The pervasiveness of the anti-German sentiment can be seen in the attempts to discredit causes by showing that they had some German connection. Some Conservatives in Alberta attempted to disparage the populist Non-Partisan League by charging that the head of the League in North Dakota, "Boss" Townley, was pro-German.<sup>2</sup> Since Germans were considered to be controlling the liquor industry in North America, prohibitionists attempted to discredit opponents of prohibition by accusing them of pro-Germanism.<sup>3</sup>

The fear of subversive German activities in western Canada was not allayed by various attempts of German reservists to return to Germany to rejoin their armies immediately at the outbreak of war. Government officials found it necessary to stop hundreds of German-Austrian

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<sup>1</sup>Carlstadt News, June, 1915.

<sup>2</sup>Paul F. Sharp, Agrarian Revolt in Western Canada, (Minneapolis, 1948), p. 96.

<sup>3</sup>E.B., July 2, 1915.



reservists who tried to get to the front.<sup>1</sup> German officers from Hussar, Alberta, journeyed in pairs to New York where they met to continue together by boat. They were captured by the British navy and temporarily interned in Britain.<sup>2</sup> Police thwarted the attempt by Austrians in Fernie to return to their native land through the U.S.<sup>3</sup>

In order to stop reservists from returning to their homeland, a government proclamation early in November provided for the registration of unnaturalized<sup>4</sup> enemy aliens who would report at a government office within one month of its opening and once a month thereafter. They were also forbidden to leave the country without a permit. Those who refused to register or to report were to be interned as prisoners of war.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>C.A.R., 1914, p. 277.

<sup>2</sup>L.H., June 14, 1914. The C.P.R. took over the land and sold it. Most of the women returned to Germany while some went to the U.S. where their husbands rejoined them at the end of the war. Hussar Heritage (n.p. 1967?)

<sup>3</sup>L.H., May 18, 1915.

<sup>4</sup>Naturalized Germans and Austrians were not interned but were allowed to enlist. The Edmonton Bulletin approved of this policy: "There is no reason why a husky Canadian of German or Austrian descent who wants to keep free the land of his forefathers from militarism should not be allowed to do so." (E.B., Dec. 2, 1914).

<sup>5</sup>P.C., 2721, Oct. 28, 1914. Armenians were the only enemy alien group exempted from these restrictions (probably because they were the most persecuted minority in the territories of the enemy powers).





Many non-English speaking immigrants were ignorant of the requirements and were interned when it was found they had not complied. Those who were considered a menace to "the safety of the country" or to "peace and order" were also to be interned. Internment camps in Alberta included the exhibition buildings in Lethbridge, the Parks Building at Banff, tents at Castle Mountain, and railway cars at Munson.<sup>1</sup>

In August, 1915, the government issued a proclamation providing for the arrest and detention of German and Austrian officers, soldiers and civilians attempting to leave Canada when there was reasonable ground to believe that they intended to help the enemy, and of German and Austrian subjects engaging in espionage.

A subsequent Order in Council <sup>2</sup> provided for

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<sup>1</sup>William Otter, Internment Operations 1914-1920, (Ottawa, King's Printer, 1921), p. 5. The camp at Lethbridge was established for German officers, the other at Castle for about 400 Austro-Hungarians. The camp at Castle was opened July 14, 1915. (Logbook, Major Duncan Stewart.) The internees engaged in make-work activities, including road clearing. Most had worked on section gangs, and the government was worried about bridge sabotage. Few German or Austro-Hungarian farmers were interned. (Interview, R.A. Millican, camp guard, Calgary, May, 1969.)

<sup>2</sup>Sept. 20, 1916, OC #2194.



the registration of "every alien of enemy nationality residing or being in Canada who has no permanent place of residence or abode in Canada."

Many of those interned protested their situation. Some tried to escape, while others took legal action to nullify the action of authorities in placing them in detention camps.<sup>1</sup> Internees at Castle Mountain protested to the Governor General when he visited the camp in September, 1915.<sup>2</sup>

Immigrant laborers were immediately affected by unemployment in the early days of the war. In 1914 business firms and municipal governments across Canada discharged Germans from their jobs.<sup>3</sup> Many of the Germans who were forced out of work along with others who feared reprisals left for the neutral U.S.<sup>4</sup>

Since coal was needed to help the war effort "enemy alien" mine workers were usually retained in their jobs, but not without some conflict. In June, 1915, English-speaking and Italian miners at Fernie and Hillcrest refused to work as long as the Austro-Hungarians and Germans were kept on.<sup>5</sup> The men

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<sup>1</sup>L.H., June 17, 1915.

<sup>2</sup>Log Book, Major Duncan Stewart, Sept. 14, 1915. Glenbow Foundation Archives.

<sup>3</sup>D.C., August 6, 1914.

<sup>4</sup>The Government encouraged those of non-military age to secure temporary work in the U.S. (David E. Smith, "Emergency Government in Canada", Canadian Historical Review, Dec. 1969, p. 436.)

<sup>5</sup>L.H., June 8, 16, 22, 1915; F.F.P., June 11, 1915.



feared underground sabotage of the mine, since a mine at Nanaimo, B.C. had recently been rocked by an explosion which some attributed to the work of enemy aliens. Despite attempts by union officials to keep the men working while negotiations were carried on with management, and while opposition was being expressed by local businessmen, city officials and mine owners,<sup>1</sup> the miners remained adamant and stayed off their jobs. At a union meeting frequent references were made to German outrages in Belgium and to the sinking of the Lusitania<sup>2</sup> to justify anti-German sentiment. The immediate problem was solved with the internment of the enemy alien miners, first at Fernie, Coal Creek, and Michel, and later at Banff and Lethbridge.<sup>3</sup> Naturalized Germans were not interned.

The German army's use of gas and the sinking of the Lusitania in 1915 brought anti-German sentiment to a new high. Anti-German nativists in Alberta renewed attempts to have naturalized enemy aliens interned, disfranchised, and

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<sup>1</sup> Canadian Mining Journal quoted in C.A.R., 1915, p. 355 and F.F.P., June 25, 1915.

<sup>2</sup> L.H., June 9, 1915.

<sup>3</sup> L.H., June 17, 1915.



removed from their jobs. These acts of reprisal by private groups reflected the conviction that the government was timid and negligent in dealing with traitors: they believed that the weakness of government action compelled them to take the law into their own hands.

Demands for dismissing Germans from their jobs and interning them were strongest in Calgary, which had the largest German population of any urban area in Alberta,<sup>1</sup> and which was consequently the city where German workers were most likely to be in competition with Canadians for jobs. Demands for restrictions on Germans were not as great in rural areas where German farmers did not compete with Canadian farmers. In May, 1915 citizen's groups and the press in Calgary demanded that City Council fire enemy aliens and remove German and Austrian property owners from the voters' list, thus dissolving any political power the aliens might have. Calgary's Orange Order and the Sons of England organized a rally to demand the internment of all aliens.<sup>2</sup> A group of unemployed workers passed a resolution protesting the employment of any German or Austrian in the city service or the C.P.R.<sup>3</sup> Sixty-five workers in a leather company

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<sup>1</sup>2,608 in 1911.

<sup>2</sup>C.H., May 11, 17, 20, 1915.

<sup>3</sup>C.H., May 5, 1915.





issued an ultimatum to the management to discharge all German or Austrian employees whose countrymen had proved to be "beasts". The workers went on strike when the management refused to accede to their request.<sup>1</sup> The newspapers were barraged with letters demanding dismissal and internment of Germans. After repeated demands, City Council agreed to dismiss all city employees of German and Austrian nationality.<sup>2</sup>

Partially the aftermath of the burning of the parliament building in February, 1916 which many blamed on the Germans, anti-German hysteria reached a climax. In Calgary frustration caused by the war and by military discipline found release in attacks on "pro-German" businesses by mobs of soldiers and civilians. A rumor that a restaurant had discharged returned veterans and employed Germans in their places provided a focal point for anti-German wrath. A mob of 500 soldiers and civilians ignored police who were guarding the building and tore apart the restaurant and an upstairs dance studio which had been the club room of a German organization.<sup>3</sup> The following night, a mob of 1,500 soldiers and civilians wrecked the Riverside Hotel. The rumor had spread that the English owner was actually a German, and that a number of German sympathizers had met at the hotel

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<sup>1</sup>C.H., May 18, 1915.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>C.H., Feb. 11, 1916 and E. Gerwin, "Germans in Alberta", p. 14.



to celebrate the burning of the Canadian Parliament Buildings. Several other businesses were saved by the action of the military authorities who placed a heavy guard around them.

The newspapers, city council, and clergymen in Calgary condemned the rioters for breaking the law but most people agreed that Germans in Canada were not being controlled sufficiently.<sup>1</sup> The Calgary Herald argued that the government had good reason to be generous to Germans and Austrians resident in Canada but reasoned that the citizens' reactions to generous treatment might be of even more serious consequence to the Germans. In any case, the aggressiveness of certain Germans and the undue leniency toward pro-German newspapers could not be tolerated.<sup>2</sup> Individuals attempted to justify the action of the mob on the grounds that the lenient treatment of enemy aliens could no longer be tolerated.<sup>3</sup> One letter writer thundered,

perhaps our fellows ought to be thankful that they are being killed or maimed while fighting Teutons, while thousands of these same Teutons are holding Canadian government and civic jobs. They should perhaps be rejoiced that these same Teutons are in control through their votes... that these same Teutons are working against them in Canada to the full extent of their unscrupulous ability... 4

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<sup>1</sup>C.A., Feb. 12, 1916; C.H., Feb. 12, 1916; E.B., Feb. 12, 1916.

<sup>2</sup>C.H., March 1, 1916.

<sup>3</sup>C.A., Feb. 17, 18, 1916.

<sup>4</sup>C.H., Feb. 15, 1916.



The writer declared that there was no difference between naturalized and unnaturalized Germans.

The disturbances in Calgary encouraged anti-German feelings in Edmonton and Lethbridge. Anti-German agitators in Edmonton made threats that the Macdonald Hotel would be attacked because it employed alien labor but a guard which was rushed to the hotel prevented any disturbances.<sup>1</sup> In the aftermath of the burning of the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa, and the "raids" in Alberta, Charles Stewart assured the public that no foreign-born guards were on duty at the Legislative Assembly.<sup>2</sup> Citizens demanded that the Edmonton city Council dismiss all alien employees.<sup>3</sup> As a result, Council decided to suspend all alien laborers until they could produce their naturalization papers. Although employment of enemy aliens did not become a significant issue in Lethbridge, which had a relatively small German population, one business felt compelled to silence a rumor by assuring the public that it was managed by "Britishers" and that all its employees were British born.<sup>4</sup>

The demands for internment gradually disappeared as western Canada was faced with a severe labor shortage. In April, 1916, the government announced that a large number of

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<sup>1</sup>C.A., Feb. 16, 1916.

<sup>2</sup>E.B., May 30, 1916.

<sup>3</sup>E.B., Feb. 16, 1916.

<sup>4</sup>L.H., Feb. 29, 1916.



the enemy aliens in detention camps would be released upon the request of farmers, to aid in agricultural operations.<sup>1</sup> In May preparations were made to release 1000 enemy aliens to work in mines in Alberta, B.C. and Nova Scotia<sup>2</sup>, on condition that they be paid current wages and that their work not be taken at expense of native-born Canadians.<sup>3</sup> There was also some discussion of a possible suspension of the Alien Labor Act so that labor could be made available for the munitions factories.<sup>4</sup> Despite opposition from some Canadian miners, during the summer alien miners were released from the different internment camps.<sup>5</sup>

### Canadianization

The need for assimilation was seen as a pressing problem once the war awakened native Canadians to the "dangers" of citizens with loyalties to hostile countries. A Calgarian warned that Canada needed to exercise more care in its choice of citizens. "Only types who readily assimilate should be allowed to enter."<sup>6</sup> The Vegreville Observer wrote that Canada did not need hyphenated Canadians (although this need not apply

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., April 5, 1916.

<sup>2</sup>E.B., May 30, 1916.

<sup>3</sup>Smith, "Emergency Government", p. 437.

<sup>4</sup>E.B., Sept. 21, 1916.

<sup>5</sup>R.N.W.M.P. Reports, 1917, S.P. #28 Lethbridge Detachment Report. C.H., July 14, 1916.

<sup>6</sup>C.A., Feb. 17, 1916.





to French-Canadians): "This country is big enough, broad enough and good enough to demand from its citizens unequivocally that they drop this hyphenated stuff entirely and become Canadian only."<sup>1</sup> Either that, or get out. "H.D." maintained that the only way Ukrainians could overcome prejudice was "to forget their hyphens, forget their dreams of bilingualism and adopt in their speeches. . .the language of the land in which they dwell. . ."<sup>2</sup> The Women's Christian Temperance Union urged that "foreigners" be helped to become good citizens through night classes. "Helping these women to learn our language, see things from our viewpoint and adopt our ideals would in no small way contribute to a better Canada."<sup>3</sup> The provincial meeting of the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire in 1920 urged that women take a greater interest in rural schools, especially those with a large percentage of foreign born students.<sup>4</sup> The Order's national conference in 1919 advocated a "Canadianization campaign"<sup>5</sup> to "propagate British ideals and institutions", to "banish old world points of view",

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<sup>1</sup>V.O., Aug. 2, 1918.

<sup>2</sup>Reported in Red Deer Advocate, April 25, 1919.

<sup>3</sup>W.C.T.U. Report of Fourth Annual Convention (Red Deer, 1916), p. 58.

<sup>4</sup>E.B. Oct. 29, 1920.

<sup>5</sup>L.H., May 29, 1919.



old world prejudices, old world rivalries and suspicions", and to make new Canadians "one hundred percent British in language, thought, feeling and impulse."<sup>1</sup>

This drive for assimilation was not to meet with unanimous support. Catholics suspected that Protestants were more interested in making converts than Canadian citizens.<sup>2</sup>

Eastern and Southern European Response to the War

Czechs, Slovaks, Hungarians, Scandinavians, Jews and most Ukrainians in Alberta, unlike German-Canadians, supported the Allied war cause, some with the hope that nationalistic dreams might be fulfilled, and others with the wish to dissociate themselves from the enemy so that they would not be treated as enemy aliens. Once they established that they were not enemies, they were regarded with more sympathy and accorded some protection.

Czechs, Slovaks, and Ukrainians who were interned along with Germans and Austrians objected to this treatment. The Slovak League of America sent a representative to Ottawa in June 1915 to try to convince General W.D. Otter, registrar

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<sup>1</sup>Ironically, the meeting also protested foreigners taking British names.

<sup>2</sup>G. Daly, Catholic Problems in Western Canada (Toronto, 1921). Daly, a former rector of the Catholic cathedral in Regina, argued that mutual toleration would help bring about assimilation much more quickly than coercive assimilation advocated by "ultra-loyal" factions.



of enemy aliens, that Slovaks were friendly to the Allies<sup>1</sup>. Gadzik, the representative, was successful and toured the internment camps in British Columbia and at Lethbridge where he recommended Slovaks for release<sup>2</sup>. But those released were not allowed to serve in the armed forces. The government also recognized the Czechs' claim that they did not support Austria. The August 1918 Order in Council which required all enemy aliens over sixteen to register specifically exempted Czechs or members of the Bohemian National Alliance.<sup>3</sup>

Czechs and Slovaks in Alberta attempted to show their loyalty to the Allied cause. In the Crow's Nest Pass in September, 1918, they paraded, attired in their native costumes, and carrying Allied flags from Frank to Bellevue<sup>4</sup>. At a public meeting sponsored by the Alliance, Czechs and Slovaks joined members of the Polish League to attest their loyalty and contribute money to the war effort. A Slovak in Lethbridge also proclaimed the loyalty of Czechs and Slovaks, who, he argued, were not Germans, Austrians or Bulgarians. Their hatred for the German and Austro-Hungarian governments "is only

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<sup>1</sup>Neither Czechs nor Slovaks in Europe were enthusiastic in their support of Austria during the war.

<sup>2</sup>J.M. Kirschbaum, Slovaks in Canada (Toronto, 1967), p. 93.

<sup>3</sup>This organization had been formed by several immigrant groups in 1914, with headquarters in Chicago to collect funds for the relief of war victims. The alliance had established contact with Czech leaders in Prague who were campaigning for autonomy within the Austrian Empire. Oscar Handlin, American People in the Twentieth Century (Cambridge, Mass., 1966).

<sup>4</sup>L.H., Sept. 7, 1918, and Blairmore Enterprise, Sept. 6, 1918.



exceeded by their love for freedom and this country of ours. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Italy remained neutral at the beginning of the war, but, although there were no restrictions on the Italians,<sup>2</sup> they were not allowed to enlist. They did, nevertheless, identify themselves with the Allies. Italian miners in the Crow's Nest Pass joined with the British to strike at Hillcrest and Fernie against the employment of enemy aliens.

With the announcement that Italy had entered the war, the Italians in Alberta hastened to express their solidarity with the Allied cause. Italians in Calgary besieged the office of the Italian consul, urging him to offer the military authorities several pioneer companies to be composed of Italians. Amid scenes of "utmost enthusiasm" they marched through the streets to city hall where the Italian consul delivered a patriotic address.<sup>3</sup> The three hundred Italians in Lethbridge let it be known that they were anxious to fight for their native country, and Fernie Italians paraded through the main street with the Italian flag and the Union Jack.<sup>4</sup> Although enlistment was not rapid and calls went out for

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<sup>1</sup>John Vaselenak, Letter to editor, L.H., Oct. 12, 1918.

<sup>2</sup>There were 2,139 Italians in Alberta in 1911, mostly in the mining areas.

<sup>3</sup>C.H., May 22, 1915.

<sup>4</sup>L.H., May 22, 1915.





increased support,<sup>1</sup> by September, 1915, seventy-five Italian reservists from the Fernie area had departed.<sup>2</sup>

Alberta's Hungarians, formerly loyal to the Hapsburgs, now turned against the old order and made attempts to dissociate themselves from Germany and Austria. One Hungarian in North Lethbridge wrote to the paper to let all Canadians know that "Hungary is not Austria." He argued that the people in Hungary were fighting only because they were forced to. He wanted the paper to explain this position "so the Englishmen will not be so sore at us."<sup>3</sup>

Pacifist Mennonites were divided in their attitude toward the war. Mennonites at Tofield and Linden did not join the armed services, but a few did join at Didsbury.<sup>4</sup> Many Mennonites participated in community efforts designed to advance the war effort in order to allay prejudice against them. But considerable resentment arose over the pacifism of all Mennonite groups<sup>5</sup> and the use of German by the Holdemanites at Linden and the General Conference Mennonites near Didsbury. The Old Mennonites, Mennonite Brethren in Christ and

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<sup>1</sup> Fernie Free Press, July 23, 1915.

<sup>2</sup> F.F.P., Aug. 20, 1915, and Sept. 10, 1915.

<sup>3</sup> L.H., Nov. 18, 1914.

<sup>4</sup> Sawatzsky, "Mennonites", p. 64.

<sup>5</sup> Interview, J. Stauffer, Tofield, Alberta, October, 1968.



Holdemanites were exempted from military service on an individual basis, while the General Conference Mennonites were all exempted in accord with the agreement reached with the government when they had first come to Manitoba in 1873.<sup>1</sup>

Hostility towards Mennonites was further aroused with the arrival of Hutterites in southern Alberta, eventually culminating in their disfranchisement and the prohibition of Mennonite immigration.

Some North American Jews distrusted the Allies, since Russia had supported anti-semitic movements all over Europe and had conducted savage pogroms in Russia.<sup>2</sup> Germany, by contrast, had given Jews a great deal of freedom and German Jews had risen to positions of economic and social eminence. But Jews in Alberta nonetheless supported the war effort.<sup>3</sup>

While American Scandinavians, both in imitation of the policy of their homelands and as a result of anti-militarist convictions, strongly favored a peace policy, Scandinavian-Canadians generally supported the war, and Alberta recruited a Scandinavian battalion.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Sawatzsky, p. 75.

<sup>2</sup>Oscar Handlin, The American People in the Twentieth Century (2nd ed.; Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 117.

<sup>3</sup>Interview, Jewish informants, Edmonton, Lethbridge, August, 1969.

<sup>4</sup>E.B., Feb. 21, 1916.



Alberta's Russians were urged by the administrator of the Russian Greek Orthodox Mission of Canada, V.R. Phillippovsky, to give "liberty and life to our oppressed countrymen in Carpatho-Russia [this area was controlled by the Magyars], Belgium, Serbia, and all other countries that are suffering now from the barbarous hands of Germans."<sup>1</sup>

The Poles in Canada who had been born in the German and Austrian parts of Poland were also treated as enemy aliens despite the Poles' hatred for both Germany and Austria and their support for the Allies as Polish hopes for a united and independent state grew. Polish miners were interned, but farmers were not molested.<sup>2</sup> The Polish Central Relief Committee protested against this policy to the Canadian government without success.<sup>3</sup> The Poles from the Russian part of Poland were in an anomalous position since, although they were exempted from restrictions since Russia was allied with England, they were anti-Russian and wanted to see Russia defeated. However, these Poles refrained from any anti-Russian activities. Eventually the situation was cleared and Canadian authorities withdrew the regulations treating Poles as enemy aliens.<sup>4</sup> Canadian authorities at first refused to

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., Sept. 30, 1918.

<sup>2</sup>Interview, Father A. Sylla, Polish Catholic Priest, Edmonton, 1969.

<sup>3</sup>Polish Central Relief Committee (Chicago) to the Government of the Dominion of Canada, P.A.C., April 15, 1915, Borden Papers, R.B. 675 (3) 106471.

<sup>4</sup>Victor Turek, Poles in Manitoba, (Toronto, 1967), p. 137.



enlist Poles for active service but later changed the policy, although they were still reluctant to admit Poles to serve at the front.

Poles in Alberta made several attempts to dissociate themselves from the Germans. When the question of the employment of enemy aliens was being hotly debated in Calgary, a group of Poles tried to dissociate themselves from Germans and Austrians so they would not be dismissed from their work. "We Poles who had the misfortune to be born either under Austrian or German yoke, through no fault of ours, who have come to this country to take refuge from the terrible persecution that we have suffered in Germany and Austria, protest against being considered Germans or Austrians."<sup>1</sup> Poles in Fernie denied that they were enemy aliens.<sup>2</sup> In February, 1919, a Polish delegation headed by two Polish Oblates and composed of a number of Polish farmers, visited Premier Stewart to ask for fair treatment of the Poles. They stated that some farmers were not prepared to plant crops since they feared that their land would be taken from them, and asked that schools be provided for their children, as they wanted their children to be educated as "loyal Canadians". They also maintained that they did not want to be associated with any "ill advised movement of

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<sup>1</sup>C.H., May 27, 1915. Letter to the editor by John Lis and Nicholas Jozwiak. Lis was a representative of a socialist anti-clerical paper, The Polish American. For another appeal by Polish workmen, see C.H., Feb. 22, 1916.

<sup>2</sup>F.F.P., March 14, 1919.





other classes of foreign birth",<sup>1</sup> and stated that they had "entire confidence in British fair play towards the Allied Polish nation."<sup>2</sup>

Once "foreigners" could establish themselves as not being associated with the Germans, they were accepted to an unprecedented degree, and "foreigners" began participating in community affairs like Red Cross projects and victory bond drives.

Ukrainian Canadians were not as successful in convincing the government that they were loyal to the Allied cause. Despite repeated protestations of loyalty, the Ukrainians were continually suspect. Canada's entry into the First World War against Austria put Ukrainian-Canadians in a precarious position, since most had come from Austrian provinces. The war found Ukrainians divided in loyalty and a few returned to Austria to serve in the armed forces; Ukrainian socialists, however, counselled neutrality.<sup>3</sup>

Just before Canada's declaration of war, western Canada's Ukrainian Catholic Bishop Budka advised Ukrainians of Austrian nationality to support "the peace-loving Emperor Franz Joseph", and counselled reservists to return to the fatherland.<sup>4</sup> Despite a second statement a week

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<sup>1</sup>The Ukrainian Labor Farm Temple Association.

<sup>2</sup>E.B., Feb. 20, 1919. Interview, Father A. Sylla, Edmonton, 1969.

<sup>3</sup>The Bulletin warned the Ukrainians against accepting these socialist ideas. (E.B., Aug. 19, 1914.)

<sup>4</sup>Yuzyk, Ukrainians, p. 186.



later which reversed his position, the original letter received wide circulation by the press, thus raising questions about the loyalty of Ukrainians. In response to these doubts, Ukrainians in various parts of western Canada, including Edmonton, held demonstrations to protest Budka's statement and to show their loyalty. One speaker in Edmonton denounced the Bishop as a traitor to his people since the main goal of Ukrainians should be the establishment of an independent republic.<sup>1</sup>

Some Ukrainians tried to avoid the stigma of being treated as enemy aliens by maintaining they were Russians. This was made easier in Alberta by the fact that many Ukrainians belonged to the Russian Orthodox Church since Russian Orthodox missionaries had been among the first clergy to come to Alberta with the intention of establishing Ukrainian congregations. While the Russophile movement had no support in Manitoba or Saskatchewan, it gained considerable support in Alberta.<sup>2</sup> A meeting of Ukrainians at Rabbit Hills on September 5, 1915 passed a resolution of British loyalty and protested against the Galicians and Bucovinians being called "Ruthenians" or "Ukrainians", alleging that these terms were applied by pro-Germans to the Russians who had resided in Galicia and Bucovina.<sup>3</sup> Ukrainians published and read the Russian Voice which originated in Edmonton in 1916.

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., July 31, 1914.

<sup>2</sup>Woodsworth, "Ukrainian Rural Communities", p. 84.

<sup>3</sup>C.A.R., 1915, p. 702.



Throughout the war, Ukrainians in Alberta made various attestations of loyalty and objected to their treatment as enemy aliens. In July, 1916 the editors of six Ukrainian papers in Canada including The Canadian Farmer (a Liberal paper which Oliver had established in Winnipeg), and Kanadiyets (a Ukrainian Methodist weekly in Edmonton), submitted "an address to the Canadian people" to the Canadian press in which they protested against being treated as enemy Austrians, and asked the Canadian people for better treatment since many Ukrainians had proved their loyalty on the battlefields.<sup>1</sup> A group of Ukrainian women in Calgary objected to their dismissal since they were left without jobs.<sup>2</sup>

Ukrainian farmers, who were not interned along with Ukrainian miners and railway workers, met in Vegreville in January, 1917, to express their loyalty to Canada and Great Britain. The group protested the application of the word "foreigners" to Ukrainians.

What the Ukrainians perceived as governmental hostility, manifested in the school policies of the western provinces and the government's treatment of Ukrainians as enemy aliens, contributed to the increase in national

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<sup>1</sup>Yuzyk, Ukrainians, p. 188.

<sup>2</sup>C.H., Feb. 5, 1916.

<sup>3</sup>Farmer's Weekly, January 24, 1917.



consciousness among Ukrainians which in turn further aroused anxieties among Canadians. Ukrainian nationalism in Canada was also quickened by the establishment of the short-lived Ukrainian Republic in 1918 and found expression in the establishment of Ukrainian National Homes<sup>1</sup> and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (in 1918). A Presbyterian minister in Alberta expressed his fears about the increasing nationalism among Ukrainians in a letter to R.B. Bennett. While he admitted that he knew little about the movement, he warned "it seems to me that the movement should be watched..." since the central powers could be supporting it.<sup>2</sup> Bennett passed the warning on to Borden stating, "He raises a question that has been at the back of my mind for a very long time..."<sup>3</sup>

In 1918 and 1919 the increased hostility of veterans again forced Ukrainians to attest their loyalty to Canada and to protest their treatment as aliens, and Bishop Budka admonished Ukrainians to support all patriotic endeavors.<sup>4</sup> When veterans' organizations passed resolutions proposing that enemy alien land be confiscated, two members of the Alberta legislature, J.S. McCallum and a Ukrainian, Alexander Shandro, visited Prime Minister Borden and received assurances that the government did not contemplate any such action.<sup>5</sup> In February

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<sup>1</sup>Educational centers to imbue older immigrants with a sense of Ukrainian identity.

<sup>2</sup>P.A.C., R.L.B. 1320-122146, J.T. Ferguson to R.B. Bennett, Jan. 5, 1917.

<sup>3</sup>P.A.C., R.L.B. 1320-122148, R.B. Bennett to Borden, Jan. 22, 1917.

<sup>4</sup>Vegreville Observer, Sept. 11, 1918.

<sup>5</sup>E.B., Feb. 19, 1918.





1918, a group of Ukrainians in Edmonton sent a petition to Sir Thomas White, the acting Prime Minister, protesting the loss of their jobs. The petition stated that while recognizing the veterans' rights, "We also desire to live and to do so we must have jobs or else we will perish from hunger. . ."<sup>1</sup> The Ukrainian Literary Society and the National Co-operative Company Limited adopted a resolution volunteering to help any returned soldier settling in the Ukrainian districts by offering to do all the required improvements on their farms.<sup>2</sup>

#### ORIENTALS

Attitudes toward Orientals in Canada during World War I were more relaxed than before the war since a labor shortage developed in the dominion which some believed could be solved through the employment of Orientals, since nativist hostilities were directed toward Germans and other enemy aliens, and since China was not a belligerent power. Early in 1917, employers across Canada and agricultural interests in British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Alberta requested the government to bring in Chinese laborers to relieve the labor shortage.<sup>3</sup> When these proposals were opposed by labor

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<sup>1</sup>P.A.C., Borden Papers, S. Malashcuk and J. Klybanousky to Borden, 252 83069.

<sup>2</sup>Red Deer Advocate, April 25, 1919.

<sup>3</sup>Cheng, Oriental Immigration in Canada, p. 83.



organizations, the government decided not to bring in any more Chinese. However, the fact that the Orientals did help the labor shortage, combined with the Japanese alliance with Britain and the participation of some Japanese-Canadians in the Canadian forces eased tensions to some degree.<sup>1</sup>

While before 1914 the Chinese benevolent societies had usually been regarded as sinister bodies,<sup>2</sup> such fears largely vanished during the war as it became clear that they were really mutual benefit organizations. Both whites and Chinese in Canada were enthusiastic about the 1911 Chinese revolution. This served to legitimize branches of the Chinese National League which were established in Edmonton, Calgary, and Lethbridge<sup>3</sup> to give support to the revolutionary government. The newspapers described the activities of the League and its rival organization, the Chinese Free Masons, and occidentals occasionally participated in their activities. The government banned the Chinese National League after the assassination of a Chinese diplomat in September, 1918 but the League soon proved its innocence and the government rescinded the ban.<sup>4</sup> The Lethbridge League

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<sup>1</sup>Young, et.al., Japanese Canadians, p. 128.

<sup>2</sup>L.N., Feb. 12, 1909.

<sup>3</sup>L.H., June 7, 1915; C.A., Jan. 15, 1912; C.N.T., Feb. 20, 1912; C.A., March 31, 1920.

<sup>4</sup>C.A., Sept. 30, 1918; L.H., June 16, 1919.



explained that its purpose was to educate local Chinese along democratic lines of government, and officials of the League urged English-speaking Canadians to help them in these "progressive policies".<sup>1</sup>

The return of the veterans in 1918 re-introduced strains into the economies of British Columbia and Alberta and, as a result, hostility towards Orientals again flourished in the laboring class. The United Mine Workers urged Premier Stewart to eliminate the employment of Orientals around the mines. Stewart replied that while the provincial government opposed their importation, it could not act on the request.<sup>2</sup> Anti-Oriental sentiment continued in Alberta through the early 20's and Albertans generally supported the Chinese Immigration Act of 1923, which Stewart introduced as Mackenzie King's Minister of the Interior, and which, with minor exceptions, completely prevented further Chinese immigration.

#### Disfranchisement

The loyalty of enemy aliens in western Canada became a central political issue in 1917 when the question of disfranchisement of naturalized<sup>3</sup> enemy aliens arose as an election issue at the provincial and federal levels. With

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<sup>1</sup>L.H., June 16, 1919.

<sup>2</sup>E.B., March 27, 1918.

<sup>3</sup>All unnaturalized enemy aliens had been removed from the voter's list in the early stages of the war. (E.B., Nov. 20, 1914.)



federal and provincial elections in the offing in 1917, Conservative newspapers and politicians and patriotic organizations, including the Orange Order, Sons of England, and Great War Veterans Association, and women's organizations including the National Equal Franchise Association, the National Council of Women, and the W.C.T.U.,<sup>1</sup> pressed for disfranchisement of enemy aliens who, it was feared, would vote against conscription,<sup>2</sup> thus endangering the supremely important war effort.

During the 1917 provincial election campaign in Alberta, Conservatives led by Tweedie (Calgary Center) pressed for the disfranchisement of enemy aliens.<sup>3</sup> The Calgary Herald argued,

If the enemy country citizens are not thought good enough to be sent to fight for the country they should not be considered safe enough to exercise the franchise. 4

The succeeding edition predicted that "hordes of untutored foreigners, many of alien enemy origin, will be driven like cattle to the polls to vote for a Siftonian democracy."<sup>5</sup> Since naturalized Austrians and Germans had been guilty of disloyal acts while others "cherished disloyal sentiments"

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<sup>1</sup>J.A. Boudreau, "The Enemy Alien Problem in Canada: 1914-1921" (Ph.D., U.C.L.A., 1965), p. 65, 129; C.H., April 16, 1917. P.A.C. Borden Papers, #123138.

<sup>2</sup>This was generally true, but not for the reasons usually imagined. Many Ukrainians and Moravians, Mennonites, and Estonians had come from Russia to escape conscription, and many Scandinavians had anti-militarist convictions (Frank Epp, Mennonite Exodus, (Altona, Manitoba, 1962); Clement Hoyler, "A Brief Introduction to the History of the Moravian Church in Western Canada", Transactions of the Moravian Historical Society, XIV, 1951, p.364; Notes on The Canadian Family Tree, (Ottawa, 1967), p. 107.

<sup>3</sup>Camrose Canadian, May 31, 1917.

<sup>4</sup>C.H., ed. May 21, 1917. See also May 18, 1917.

<sup>5</sup>C.H., ed. May 22, 1917.





which they had not expressed, they should be disfranchised.<sup>1</sup>

The Liberal government resisted the pressure for disfranchisement. Premier Sifton defended the government's inaction by arguing that since the immigrants had been naturalized by the Dominion Government, their citizenship could only be suspended by that government.<sup>2</sup> Liberal papers supported the government's position: the Edmonton Bulletin explained that the naturalized enemy aliens would vote Liberal.<sup>3</sup> The Liberal Lethbridge Herald attacked Conservatives for using "Hun tactics" in their attempt to make the enemy aliens suffer for "Hunnish crimes". Since these immigrants had been invited to Canada and had become British citizens, they were entitled to the ballot.<sup>4</sup>

The overwhelming victory of Sifton in the election could indicate that the enemy alien issue had little impact on the Alberta public—in fact it probably alienated many immigrants who might not otherwise have voted Liberal—but since there were a number of other issues it is difficult to know what the impact of the issue was.<sup>5</sup> Conservative losses in the election, as well as in the Saskatchewan

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>E.B., May 22, 1917.

<sup>3</sup>E.B., April 30, May 3, 1917.

<sup>4</sup>L.H., ed. May 25, 1917.

<sup>5</sup>L.G. Thomas, Liberal Party, p. 175.



provincial election, strengthened Conservative support for the disfranchisement plan which Prime Minister Borden was considering.

The Conservative leader of the opposition in Alberta, Michener, reported to Borden that the foreign population had voted against the Alberta Conservatives because of the untimely announcement of conscription before the election. Michener urged disfranchisement:

Before the election I was not in favor of the disfranchisement of the alien enemy born, but seeing the result of the present campaign and the pro-German appeal that the government has made, I am satisfied that if you decide to appeal to the country unless you decide to disfranchise all the enemy alien born they will have the balance of power to defeat most of our candidates in the Province. 1

Borden replied that this "information...may prove very useful."<sup>2</sup> John Lavell, an unsuccessful Conservative candidate in the provincial election, wrote to Borden urging disfranchisement in order to assure the success of conscription. According to Lavell, German Russians were "just as strong pro-Germans as any born German..." and Swedes and Norwegians were anti-conscriptionist and pro-German. Foreigners voted Liberal because they were anti-conscriptionist. "I would be glad to see the next election a 'white man's election'" Lavell confided.<sup>3</sup> Individual Conservatives, as well as the

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<sup>1</sup>P.A.C., R.L.B. 1414-123090, Michener to Borden, June 11, 1917.

<sup>2</sup>P.A.C., R.L.B. 1414-123092, Borden to Michener.

<sup>3</sup>P.A.C., R.L.B. 1414-123094. Lavell to Borden, June 19, 1917.



Conservative Associations of Empress and Medicine Hat and Edmonton's Orange Order wrote to Borden urging disfranchisement.<sup>1</sup> An investment agent in Medicine Hat counselled Borden "For God's sake do not let the enemy alien vote even if you have to go to jail for taking steps to prevent him."<sup>2</sup> Another Albertan pleaded with Borden:

...for the sake of our men in battle, for the sake of the British Empire, and for the sake of all that true Britons hold dear insist on your government disenfranchising our enemies. 3

On September 6, 1917, while Borden's negotiations for a coalition with prominent Liberals and western farm leaders which might facilitate the introduction of conscription were temporarily in abeyance the government introduced the War-time Elections Act. The bill was obviously designed to maximize votes for a conscriptionist Conservative government since it enfranchised female relatives of soldiers, and disfranchised enemy aliens who had been naturalized after March 31, 1902. The bill also disfranchised Mennonites and Doukhobors, with the exception of members who volunteered for military service<sup>4</sup>, and promised that disfranchised aliens would be exempted from conscription.

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<sup>1</sup>R.L.B. 1414-123138, 123168, 123221, 123224, 123270.

<sup>2</sup>R.L.B. 1414-123194-5. Wm. Cousins to Borden, Aug. 7, 1917.

<sup>3</sup>R.L.B. 1414-123217. A. Leslie to Borden.

<sup>4</sup>This aroused no resentment among the Mennonites, since the Old Mennonites, Mennonite Brethren in Christ, Holdemanites, and the Amish had felt obligated to request disfranchisement because of popular reaction against them. (Sawatzsky, "Mennonites", p. 77.)



The Conservatives had some difficulty rationalizing the disfranchisement proposal. Arthur Meighen, Conservative Minister of the Interior, justified its provisions on the grounds that war service should be the basis for war franchise, and since the war services of enemy aliens were not being accepted, it would be unfair to allow them to vote. Prime Minister Borden and R.B. Bennett noted the problems involved in naturalized enemy aliens fighting against their former homeland when their countries did not recognize Canadian naturalization.<sup>1</sup> Bennett argued that since naturalized Germans and Austrians retained strong allegiance to their homelands (according to Bennett, "Blood" was the strongest motivator of men) they could not be allowed to influence Canadian life: "I say, by all the reasons that influence men's minds those only who are nationals should decide our national existence and our national life or death."<sup>2</sup>

Laurier Liberals and the Liberal press attacked the disfranchisement clause as unfair and "un-British". Frank Oliver of Edmonton asked in the debate, "on what ground have these men been disfranchised, except the ground that they stand accused, in the minds of our government and its supporters, of a high crime and misdemeanor of being liable to vote Liberal at the next election."<sup>3</sup> Oliver's Edmonton

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<sup>1</sup>If captured they would be treated as traitors, not prisoners of war.

<sup>2</sup>House of Commons Debates, Sept. 10, 1917, p. 5617.

<sup>3</sup>House of Commons Debates, 1917, p. 5554.





Bulletin condemned the measure as "a negation of the whole principle that citizenship is a right and that governments exist by consent of the governed."<sup>1</sup> W.A. Buchanan, the Liberal unionist M.P. from the Medicine Hat constituency attacked disfranchisement, although he had supported conscription and the union government. Buchanan noted in the Commons that the Mounted Police reported that they had practically no trouble among the foreign born element.<sup>2</sup> Buchanan's Lethbridge Herald argued that the measure was unjust not only because western Canada was dependent on citizens of enemy alien origin for mining and "rough labor" work, but also by reason of their having been invited to Canada, and their being made to assimilate their children as Canadians.<sup>3</sup> The Albertan called the bill "despotic in its methods, unfair in detail, and un-British."<sup>4</sup>

Since the coalition negotiations had collapsed in late August, the cabinet determined the final form of the franchise bill without regard for the probable opposition of conscriptionist Liberals. Most coalition Liberals were opposed to the franchise provision, but this did not prevent

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., Oct. 1, 2, 3, 1917.

<sup>2</sup>House of Commons Debates, 1917, 5580-5582

<sup>3</sup>L.H., Sept. 6, Sept. 12, 1917.

<sup>4</sup>C.A., Sept. 5, 8, 11, 1917.



them from joining the union government. During the succeeding election campaign, Alberta's former Liberal premier Arthur Sifton did not endorse the franchise act but he sat on the same platform with Conservatives who did.<sup>1</sup> The unionist Liberal M.P. from Red Deer, Michael Clark, maintained that while the liberty of Europe was threatened he was not concerned about the liberty of a few Germans and Austrians in Canada.

The Conservative press in Alberta defended the bill as necessary and just. The Herald argued that it would be wrong to allow enemy aliens to vote, since it would be "unfair to expect them to use their franchise directly against their fathers...yet should they do otherwise they would be proving false to the land of their adoption."<sup>2</sup> As for conscientious objectors, they were lucky to have the franchise in time of peace. There was some criticism of the bill by Conservatives of the provision regarding the exemption of Germans, Austrians and other enemy aliens.<sup>3</sup>

In the campaign in Alberta, the Liberals tried to capitalize upon the franchise issue. At the provincial Liberal convention, Joseph Dobrey, a Ukrainian immigrant, complained of his own disfranchisement and spoke of his sons

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<sup>1</sup>C.A., Nov. 23, 1917.

<sup>2</sup>C.H., Sept. 7, 1917.

<sup>3</sup>M.H.D.N., Sept. 15, 1917.



in the army.<sup>1</sup> He waved his naturalization certificate in the air, calling it as worthless as the Kaiser's "scrap of paper".<sup>2</sup> Although Laurier continually attacked the War-time Elections Act in his speeches, this did not gain the Liberals enough support to counteract the disloyalty charges that the unionists were foisting on them.

The worst of Laurier's fears about western Canada were confirmed by the election returns. The Unionist government returned 153 members (38 Unionist Liberals) while the Liberals garnered 62 of their 82 seats in Quebec. Only two Liberals were elected in western Canada. The only Liberal elected in Alberta was W.H. White (Victoria). Professor J.A. Boudreau estimates that without the disfranchisement, immigrants might have swung another nine prairie seats to the Liberals.<sup>3</sup>

Disfranchisement was not the sole goal of patriotic organizations and they continued to press for other legal restrictions on the aliens. The provincial secretaries of the Great War Veterans Association in the four western provinces, resentful that enemy aliens had been exempted from

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., Nov. 22, 1917, p. 2. [But the Winnipeg Free Press which had wide circulation in Alberta pointed out that immigrants with sons in the army did have the franchise.] (W.F.P., Nov. 30, 1917, p. 13.)

<sup>2</sup>M.H.D.N., Sept. 15, 1917. The "scrap of paper" was the German treaty with Belgium.

<sup>3</sup>J.A. Boudreau, "The Enemy Alien Problem", p. 162.



conscription, addressed a protest to the government demanding their conscription.<sup>1</sup> The returning veterans passed resolutions at their Edmonton convention proposing that land granted to immigrants from enemy countries be confiscated.<sup>2</sup> The Veterans, Sons of England, and British Citizenship League also demanded that alien enemy language newspapers be proscribed till the end of the war.<sup>3</sup> One Calgarian wrote that the enemy alien was waxing fat due to the laxity of the government. While some of the enemy aliens were "decent living", others openly flouted authority. Those who did not work would have to be disciplined, and those who acted in a deliberately criminal fashion should be shot.<sup>4</sup> The government resisted the introduction of further discriminatory legislation, arguing that it would be both "impracticable" and "inadvisable" to effect conscription of labor.<sup>5</sup> Labor organizations argued that conscription would bring international

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., March 27, 1918; Family Herald, Nov. 13, 1918.

<sup>2</sup>P.A.C., R.L.B. 2363. J.S. McCallum to Borden, Feb. 2, 1918.

<sup>3</sup>Red Deer News, Sept. 25, 1918.

<sup>4</sup>C.A., Aug., quoted in Red Deer Advocate, August 13, 1918.

<sup>5</sup>Government statement quoted in Mail and Empire, Feb. 18, 1918.





complications and would be undemocratic.

Edmonton's unionist M.P., H.A. Mackie, opposed conscription of alien enemy labor as unfair. Mackie argued that while the government could not tolerate idlers, any measure to compel labor would have to be of "general application", rather than to enemy aliens or aliens.<sup>1</sup> The government relented partially to this pressure and, in May, 1918, introduced an Order in Council which conscripted aliens for military purposes, and in August introduced an Order in Council which provided that every enemy alien over the age of sixteen register with the police and report monthly.<sup>2</sup> The government also bowed to pressure from patriotic groups and in 1919 extended the suspension on the right of naturalization to aliens from former enemy countries.<sup>3</sup>

#### Hutterites and Doukhobors

With resentment toward Germans, "enemy aliens" and pacifists at peak levels, the arrival of a German-speaking pacifist sect, the Hutterites,<sup>4</sup> from South Dakota was most untimely, and opposition from newspapers, patriotic

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<sup>1</sup>House of Commons Debates, April 22, 1918, p. 1004.

<sup>2</sup>R.L.B., #56655, Cahan to Doherty, Sept. 14, 1918.

<sup>3</sup>C. H. Young, Ukrainian Canadians (Toronto, 1931), p. 245. This suspension was reversed in 1920, and the 1914 naturalization bill again came into force.

<sup>4</sup>The Hutterites were referred to as Mennonites.



organizations, politicians, temperance groups and church groups was immediate. Some demanded that the Hutterites be sent back to the United States, while the less extreme argued that they could stay if they consented to conscription. The Hutterites did not represent any real threat to the interests of any group in Alberta, but they did represent a challenge to the values of Albertans at a time when these values were highly articulated and were deeply felt. The Hutterites came to Canada from South Dakota to escape persecution which had resulted from their use of the German language and from their pacifism. Two Hutterite groups, the Dariusleut and Lehreleut moved to Alberta while the Schmiedeleut settled in Manitoba. By the end of 1918, there were six Dariusleut and four Lehreleut colonies in Alberta with approximately 100 Hutterites in each colony.

Newspaper editorials and voluntary groups' petitions listed a generally uniform series of objections to the Hutterites. Pacifism was abhorrent in a society where tremendous personal sacrifices had been made in a military crusade against the forces of evil, and Hutterites were referred to as "slackers" along with other conscientious objectors. Their pacifism, together with their use of the German language, convinced some that they were German agents. Another objection was that their distinctive cultural patterns made them unassimilable, and Albertans felt that they had enough problems with unassimilated enemy



aliens. The press noted warily that the Hutterites were "tenacious" in preserving their language and "racial" identity.<sup>1</sup> If Hutterites were allowed into Alberta, they would have to become completely assimilated and accept all the "obligations" of Canadian citizenship, including military service. As the Lethbridge Herald argued: "What Canada must have is a type of citizen who thinks enough of Canada to sacrifice his life, if need be, for it."<sup>2</sup>

The same opposition to "special privileges" - in this case, conscientious objector status - for any groups, which had been the major objection to French and Ukrainian language rights in Alberta and to separate schools, formed a central objection to the Hutterites.<sup>3</sup> The Home Mission Department of the Presbyterian church warned that allowing Hutterites to settle in compact communities and to maintain the use of German<sup>4</sup> would slow assimilation, and several editorials expressed fears that the Hutterites would be allowed special educational privileges.<sup>5</sup> Some charged that the Hutterites were being given better treatment than returned veterans,<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., Sept. 27, 1918. For a list of petitions and letters received objecting to the Hutterites see P.A.C., Borden Papers, 1167. 121103-121171.

<sup>2</sup>L.H., Sept. 10, 1918.

<sup>3</sup>L.H., Oct. 9, 1918; C.A., Sept. 26, 1918; V.O., Sept. 11, 1918.

<sup>4</sup>C.A., Sept. 26, 1918. For a full copy of the resolution see P.A.C. Borden Papers, 121162, Oct. 3, 1918.

<sup>5</sup>L.H., Sept. 10, 1918.

<sup>6</sup>L.H., Oct. 16, 1918.



and the Great War Veterans Association of Macleod warned ominously that the Hutterites would crowd out "white settlers".<sup>1</sup>

The reaction in many cases was xenophobic. The Edmonton Bulletin thundered:

. . .It was not for the purpose of making Canada an asylum for slackers and a paradise for semi-citizens that Canadians enlisted to fight for the overthrow of autocracy. 2

There was little humor in Eye Opener Bob Edward's reaction:

Calder may be permitted to keep the Mennonite colonies to himself in Saskatchewan; they can't get away with that stuff over here. It's too bum.  
BUT WHY SHOULD THEY WANT TO IMPOSE SUCH A BUNCH OF GERMAN CATTLE ON US?  
That gets our goat. WHY? 3

Citizen groups in southern Alberta where the Hutterites were settling joined Manitoba veterans' organizations to demand that the government take action to stop the influx of Hutterites.<sup>4</sup> The Great War Veterans Association and Great War Next of Kin Association of Macleod, at Lethbridge, Coleman, and Medicine Hat, urged the government to cancel the Hutterites' military exemption, refuse to sell land to them, prevent the

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<sup>1</sup>L.H., Sept. 21, 1918. See also P.A.C., Borden Papers, 121163. W.A. Ras? to Borden, Oct. 7, 1918.

<sup>2</sup>E.B., Sept. 30, 1918.

<sup>3</sup>C.E.O., Oct. 5, 1918.

<sup>4</sup>P.A.C., Borden Papers, 121130. G.W.V.A. to Borden, Sept. 18, 1918.





teaching of "enemy languages and thought" and prevent further immigration.<sup>1</sup> The Women's Civic Club of the Lethbridge Board of Trade urged the government to take steps to make the Hutterites amenable to "civil and military laws".<sup>2</sup> Grande Prairie farmers also demanded that immigration cease.<sup>3</sup> Ironically, the objections which Martin Woolf, Cardston's M.L.A., raised to the Hutterites were amazingly similar to the objections which had been raised to the Mormons when they first arrived.

Liberal politicians including the Minister of the Interior, J.A. Calder, A.L. Sifton, and Frank Oliver denied veterans' charges that a secret understanding had been reached between the government and the Hutterites to allow them to enter.<sup>4</sup> Frank Carvell, the Minister of Public Works, told a Calgary audience that he would vote to suspend military exemptions, and agreed with the audience that the government was not justified in bringing into the country "immigrants who segregate themselves and who will not intermingle with the rest of the people..."<sup>5</sup>

Since government officials did not immediately act on

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<sup>1</sup>L.H., Sept. 21, 1918 and the P.A.C. Borden Papers, 121132, G.W.V.A. to Borden, Sept. 18, 1918; and 121137, Borden to Buchanan and 121140-42, resolution of G.W.V.A. of Lethbridge to Borden Sept. 22; 121168 for resolution from Coleman Next of Kin organization, and 121171 for resolution from Medicine Hat branch.

<sup>2</sup>P.A.C. Borden Papers, 121149.

<sup>3</sup>E.B., Sept. 26, 1918.

<sup>4</sup>C.A., Sept. 18, 1918.

<sup>5</sup>L.H., Oct. 21, 1918.



these demands, pressure from veterans organizations mounted early in 1919. The Calgary War Veterans sent a resolution to the provincial government demanding that "Mennonites" who had come to Canada from the U.S. be deported to the States within six months, and that all officials of the provincial government who had participated in any way in their entry be removed. The veterans warned that if the Hutterites were not deported, the men would be marched across the border.<sup>1</sup>

Continued agitation against things German, pacifism, and distinctive cultural patterns led to the passing of an immigration law in 1919 which barred Hutterites, Doukhobors, and Mennonites. This course of action was explained as follows:

Owing to conditions prevailing as a result of war, a widespread feeling exists throughout Canada, ..that steps should be taken to prohibit the landing in Canada of immigrants deemed undesirable owing to their particular customs, habits, modes of living, and methods of holding property, and because of their probable inability to become readily assimilated... 2

Several Members of Parliament from Alberta<sup>3</sup> spoke in favor of the immigration law banning Hutterites during the debates on the immigration act of 1919. They ran down the list of common objections to the Hutterites, but added

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<sup>1</sup>C.A., March 24, 1919.

<sup>2</sup>Order in Council, P.C. 1204, The Canada Gazette, June 9, 1919. See also House of Commons Debates, April 29, 1919, p. 1875 for Calder's explanation; and C.A.R. 1919, p. 587.

<sup>3</sup>Including Buchanan (Lethbridge), Tweedie (Calgary W), and Redman (Calgary E).



others, including the Hutterite belief that their own laws were above the laws of the state. Buchanan pointed out that it was not only the veterans who were opposed to the Hutterites; Canadian Clubs and women's organizations were opposed because of the communal living of the Hutterites, their refusal to allow their children to attend schools, and their refusal to register births, deaths, and marriages.<sup>1</sup>

The Hutterites protested the law, but Calder defended the restriction in a letter to Joseph Kleinsasser of the Milltown South Dakota colony. Calder stated that a decision for reversal of the restrictions would depend on the conduct of the colonies. "Unless they are prepared to become Canadian citizens in the truest and best sense of the term and unless they are ready to assume all the obligations of Canadian citizenship including military service if called upon it is extremely doubtful if any government would be prepared to admit them."<sup>2</sup> Another Order in Council (#768) in April, 1919 revoked the military exemption granted to the Hutterites in 1899 when they were considering moving to Canada to escape possible conscription during the Spanish-American war.

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<sup>1</sup>House of Commons Debates 1919, April 30, p. 1912-1914. For Tweedie's and Redman's statements, see p. 1941, 1922.

<sup>2</sup>Calder to Joseph Kleinsasser, quoted in Andreas J. Zieglshmid, Hutterite Brethren (Ithaca, 1943), p. 634.



Resentment against pacifists and unassimilated people reflected on the few Doukhobors who were living in southwestern Alberta. The first Doukhobors were brought to Alberta from Saskatchewan by the Canada Wheat Lands Limited to break up land in the Suffield area in 1912, but there is no evidence that these Doukhobors stayed.<sup>1</sup> In 1916 two new Doukhobor colonies were begun as offshoots of the British Columbia colonies at the nearest points in the Alberta foothills where wheat could be grown profitably--Cowley and Lundbreck. Six communal villages in the area were colonized by about 180 Doukhobors in family groups from British Columbia.<sup>2</sup>

While these settlers attracted little attention immediately upon their arrival, the concern over unassimilable and pacifist groups which the Hutterites had aroused soon focused attention on them. The Lethbridge Herald noted that along with the agitation against the Hutterites because of their refusal to assimilate, there was strong feeling against the Doukhobors at Cowley.<sup>3</sup> Demands for deportation which arose in Nelson<sup>4</sup> were not expressed in Alberta.

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<sup>1</sup>A.M. Pennie, "A Cycle at Suffield", Alberta Historical Review, Winter, 1963, p. 98.

<sup>2</sup>181 according to 1921 Census of Canada. Vol. I, Table 35, p. 575.

<sup>3</sup>L.H., May 5, 1919.

<sup>4</sup>Woodcock and Avakumovic, The Doukhobors, p. 253.





Reaction to Enemy Aliens, 1919-1920

Even after the war, the animus against enemy aliens persisted to discredit their language, religion, press and institutions, and in the aftermath of the war, German organizations were slow to revive. The veterans kept alive the war hatred against Germans, alien slackers, and radicals.

Veterans coveted the immigrants' jobs which gave added impetus to hostility and soon led to demands that enemy aliens be deported. The Great War Veterans Association in Edmonton appointed an industrial committee to investigate complaints relating to the employment of enemy aliens and "slackers".<sup>1</sup> Major Stafford of the Great War Veterans Association urged that the franchise not be returned to the enemy aliens except after investigation into each case by a Supreme Court judge. Stafford also expressed dissatisfaction with the land set aside for soldier resettlement. He declared that land in British Columbia which had been reserved for the returned soldiers was the same land which "Germans, Austrians, Doukhobors, Greeks, Galicians, 'Bohunks' and Chinks" had looked at and passed up because it was so poor.<sup>2</sup> "There is no room in Canada for the enemy alien and the Great War Veterans Association. One of them has got to go and that one will not be the returned soldier."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., Feb. 3, 1919.

<sup>2</sup>E.B., Feb. 7, 1919.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.



Fernie's Great War Veterans Association passed a resolution stating that since Germans, Austro-Hungarians and other enemy aliens were "undesirable citizens" not only on account of their origin but also "for many other obvious reasons", they should be deported so they would not compete with returned soldiers for jobs.<sup>1</sup> One army captain warned Fernie residents of "the enemy within our gates".<sup>2</sup> Following the visit of a delegation of the Great War Veterans Association protesting the employment of enemy aliens by the government, Premier Stewart promised that aliens of enemy origin, whether naturalized or not, would be replaced by as many veterans as wanted jobs.<sup>3</sup>

Demands for discharging aliens met with resistance from the Mine Workers' Union who objected to a government proposal that they conduct a census among the miners with the intent of discharging enemy aliens. Premier Stewart maintained that this was essential since a strong feeling had arisen that Anglo-Saxon men be given preference in hiring,<sup>4</sup> but the mine workers stated that of the 60 percent of foreign born in the mines, half were enemy aliens and nearly all of these were naturalized.

Attempts to place further restrictions on enemy aliens usually failed. An amendment to the provincial

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<sup>1</sup>F.F.P., Jan. 3, 1919.

<sup>2</sup>F.F.P., March 14, 1919.

<sup>3</sup>L.H., April 9, 1919.

<sup>4</sup>E.B., March 27, 1918.



Livestock Encouragement Act which would have prevented enemy aliens from securing the benefits of the act was defeated in the legislature on the grounds that it would be too difficult to administer.<sup>1</sup>

### Anti-Radical Nativism

The clamor for absolute loyalty continued throughout the war and into peacetime and outlawed various kinds of dissent, particularly radical activity which gained the image of being connected with pro-German feeling because radicals led the opposition to the war in western Canada. Anti-radical sentiment also tended to assume a nationalistic form because such a large proportion of radicals were immigrants: some brought ideas of class consciousness with them from Europe, and the majority of workers in the radical producing extractive industries were immigrants. Some people began to wonder what right foreigners had to disrupt the harmony of Canadian life, and reasoned that class conflict was an alien phenomenon unnecessary in Canada where there was ample opportunity for all. The anti-radical outburst in 1919 in Canada was given impetus by a similar outbreak in the United States,<sup>2</sup> although anti-radical nativism did not reach the proportions in Alberta that it did in most states with a sizeable immigrant population; it was more difficult in Canada to condemn socialism as alien because socialist

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<sup>1</sup>E.B., April 13, 1908.

<sup>2</sup>On anti-radical nativism in the United States, see Higham, Strangers, p. 222-223; in Argentina and Chile see Carl Soldberg, "Immigration and Urban Social Problems in Chile and Argentina", Hispanic-American Historical Review, p. 215-232, May, 1969.



leaders were usually British immigrants, whereas the socialist leaders in the United States were predominantly German.<sup>1</sup>

During the early stages of the war radical activity was largely absent since management and labor buried their differences to unite in the war effort,<sup>2</sup> but with increasing regimentation, such as national registration and conscription, and with war profiteering and an increased cost of living, Canadian labor became increasingly radical. Influential Liberals and Conservatives attempted to explain and discredit labor unrest in the coal industry by attributing it to foreign influences and they began making demands that immigrants be regimented. A strike in the mines at Fernie in August, 1918, which involved a number of enemy aliens, provoked the wrath of the Lethbridge Herald which suggested that Canada might follow the example of the United States and set up reclamation camps for the enemy alien striker who refused to work.<sup>3</sup> Mounted Police officials at Hillcrest reported during a strike in 1917 that "the foreign or alien element seem to be the chief agitators. . ."<sup>4</sup> The owner of the Chinook Coal Company, disturbed by the May, 1917 strike in his mines in Lethbridge, urged the government to take over the operation of the mines and "make these foreigners work at the point

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<sup>1</sup>Gad Horowitz, Canadian Labour in Politics (Toronto, 1968) p. 24.

<sup>2</sup>Logan, Trade Unions in Canada, p. 299.

<sup>3</sup>L.H., Aug. 30, 1918.

<sup>4</sup>R.L.B. 120250, Jan. 20, 1917.





of the bayonet."<sup>1</sup> A mine owner at Munson, Alberta urged the Minister of Labor to protect his laborers against a local union (fifty percent of which was enemy alien) that was trying to keep them off the job.<sup>2</sup> In October, 1918, the government eventually succumbed to pressure of this nature and prohibited strikes and lockouts for the duration of the war.<sup>3</sup>

Government leaders and public officials worried about the increase in immigrant support of radical organizations. Conservatives were particularly worried by the anarcho-syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World. During 1917, I.W.W. organizers entered Alberta to attempt to organize farm workers and miners. Immigration officials kept most of them out, while the few who did manage to enter were arrested.<sup>4</sup> The Lethbridge Herald attributed the strike of 600 miners in Lethbridge in December, 1917 to I.W.W. agitators who had stirred up the alien enemy element.<sup>5</sup> When support for the I.W.W. increased in 1918, various lawyers and police officials throughout Canada denounced the organization and warned that it manipulated mining strikes with the help of alien enemy workers.<sup>6</sup> Prime Minister Borden

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<sup>1</sup> R.B. 121124, W.A. Wood to Borden, May 16, 1917.

<sup>2</sup> R.B. 120291, May, 1917.

<sup>3</sup> P.C. 2525, Oct. 11, 1918.

<sup>4</sup> L.H., Sept. 5, 7, 1917; Bashaw Star August 23, 1917. P.A.C., R.L.B. #60977.

<sup>5</sup> L.H., Dec. 21, 1917.

<sup>6</sup> C.A.R., 1919, p. 439. R.L.B. 56611, Commissioner of Police, Ottawa, to Minister of Justice, March 5, 1918; 5688 I.R. Poole to Borden, Feb. 11, 1918.



appointed C.H. Cahan, a Montreal lawyer, to the position of Director of Public Safety, to investigate radical organizations. On the strength of his recommendations<sup>1</sup> the government passed an Order in Council on September 27, 1918 banning several leftist organizations including some that had ethnic affiliations such as the Chinese National League, Chinese Labor Association, Russian Social Democratic Party, Russian Socialist Revolutionaries, Russian Revolutionary Group, Russian Worker's Union, Ukrainian Revolutionary Group, Ukrainian Social Democratic Party, Finnish Social Democratic Party, as well as the I.W.W.<sup>2</sup> The Order in Council specified that no meetings except religious ones could be held in enemy alien languages, or in Finnish and Russian. The Order in Council affected Finnish, Ukrainian, and Chinese political organizations in Alberta, but had an even greater dampening effect on immigrant cultural organizations which could no longer operate because of the ban on any meetings where an enemy alien language was used.<sup>3</sup> The government also suppressed enemy-alien language newspapers, but this regulation was

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<sup>1</sup>P.A.C. Borden Papers, OC 519, 56665-56681, Cahan to Borden Sept. 14, 1918. Cahan reported that there was radical activity among Ukrainians at Edmonton. Cahan argued that Ukrainians and Finns were under German control so that no valid objection could be made to their registering.

<sup>2</sup>R.L.B., Dec. 30, 1918, 202263.

<sup>3</sup>Red Deer Advocate, April 25, 1919: Theatrical performance of Ukrainian Literary Society Stopped by Police. R.L.B. 61064 is a police account of radical activities among Finns at Manyberries and Ukrainians in Edmonton.



later amended to allow foreign language newspapers to publish if they printed an English translation of their content.<sup>1</sup>

Cahan wrote to J.R. Boyle, Alberta's Attorney General, to inquire whether the registration of enemy aliens should continue after the war and whether it should be extended to other groups, including Finns and Russians. He also inquired about radical organizations like the I.W.W. and asked if naturalized citizens of enemy nationalities could be "safely" restored to the rights of citizenship, whether newspaper restrictions should be removed, and whether problems requiring the aid of national police had been caused by friction between immigrants and returning veterans.<sup>2</sup> In reply, Boyle contrasted the Liberal government's provincial franchise policy with that of the federal government, and concluded that the Alberta government faced none of the difficulties cited by the questionnaire because, by implication, of the Liberals' more generous treatment, and found the immigrants "peaceable, industrious, intelligent, and law abiding."<sup>3</sup>

Western labor had become increasingly radical after the war owing to dissatisfaction with war-time policies, the

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<sup>1</sup>P.C. 2384, Sept. 25, 1918 amended by P.C. 2693, Nov. 13, 1918. C.A.R., 1918, p. 580.

<sup>2</sup>Cahan to Boyle, Nov. 28, 1918, quoted in Boudreau, "Enemy Aliens", p. 176.

<sup>3</sup>Boyle to Cahan, Dec. 30, 1918, quoted in Boudreau, Ibid.



high cost of living and dislocations caused by the influx of returned soldiers, and even more immigrants supported the One Big Union than its predecessor, the I.W.W.. The success of the Russian revolution fired the imaginations of those with radical tendencies and the Canadian government's support for the allied intervention against the Bolsheviks further alienated the radicals. Ukrainians and other "enemy aliens" were incensed that they had been interned and disfranchised. The banning of radical ethnic organizations had also produced resentment. Many leftist unions offered the hope of a more equitable distribution of wealth to immigrants who were faced with the problem of an immense rise in the cost of living. Participation in leftist activities increased the social status of immigrants long accustomed to social and political discrimination. Immigrants formed the largest proportion of leftist union membership (though not union leadership) and leftist groups were formed in western Canada among Russians, Finns, Jews, Lithuanians, and Ukrainians.

This connection between immigrants and radicalism was cemented in the public's mind by events before and during the Winnipeg General Strike, organized by the O.B.U., which had considerable support among immigrant laborers. The social unrest and revolutionary propaganda which accompanied the strike in Winnipeg in June 1919 and sympathy strikes in other cities including Calgary, Edmonton and Medicine Hat, aroused fears among some government leaders that Canada was on the verge of revolution. The Mounted





Police in Calgary counselled the "wholesale deportation of the alien trouble makers" as one means of "heading off" the O.B.U.

The Conservative government attempted to end the strike with the passage on June 7, 1919 of a bill providing for deportation under certain circumstances of foreign born Canadian citizens.<sup>1</sup> The strike leaders were arrested and Prime Minister Borden directed that the immigrant leaders be deported.

The Great War Veterans Association became the principal vehicle for anti-radical nativist sentiment in Alberta. As in the United States, veterans organizations became the guardians of national orthodoxy since they had gained a special identification with the nation through their participation in the war. The veterans' groups sought to perpetuate the corporate values of the war experience and were incensed by the fact that immigrants were upsetting social harmony by striking and talking of revolution. Hostility towards immigrant radicalism was also nursed by resentment which had built up over charges that alien labor profited during the war, and that immigrants monopolized jobs which rightly belonged to returned veterans. How could workers who had not served in the armed forces strike for higher wages when the veterans did not have jobs? A meeting of Alberta's army and navy veterans at Calgary demanded

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<sup>1</sup>  
D.C. Master, Winnipeg General Strike (Toronto, 1950), p. 103.



that Canada put enemy aliens under government control and curb their liberty of speech and action. The veterans sent a resolution to the government demanding that all property of enemy aliens be confiscated and warned that enemy aliens in the I.W.W. and the United Mine Workers might tie up the coal industry.<sup>1</sup> The Great War Veteran's Association of Alberta, while expressing sympathy with organized labor, demanded that purveyors of "anarchy, sedition, and disloyalty" be arrested or deported.

Although anti-radical nativists realized that the leadership of the radical movements was Canadian and British<sup>2</sup> the focus of hostility was the alien who, it was charged, was dragging Canadian workers into radical measures through his voting power. One Canadian unionist thundered,

. . .I want to see things fixed so that honest, thinking Canadians can't be ruled about (sic) by the vote of ignorant foreigners. I'm fed up with foreigners!"<sup>3</sup>

Increased labor unrest and immigrant support for that One Big Union in the Drumheller area led to conflict with returned veterans, but anti-radical sentiment did not reach the same heights as it did in Montana where one I.W.W.

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<sup>1</sup>V.O., August 21, 1918. Veterans' organizations throughout the country expressed similar fears about the connection between immigrants and socialism.

<sup>2</sup>William Byron, "The Menace of the Alien", Macleans, Oct., 1919, p. 32.

<sup>3</sup>Quoted in Byron, "The Menace".



organizer was lynched. When immigrants went on strike at the Rosedale mine near Drumheller in March, 1919, the manager hired 150 returned men as strike breakers. Conflict developed when the strikers prevented strike-breaking veterans from working at Drumheller. Rosedale veterans armed themselves and hurried to Drumheller to chase out the "bohunks" and "wops". The veterans ran the strike leaders out of town<sup>1</sup> and warned the strikers to return to work, which they did.<sup>2</sup> Mine owners hurriedly assured the veterans that preference in hiring would be given first to returned veterans, then to "white men" with experience, and lastly to the "alien" element.<sup>3</sup>

Mounted Police also reported small disturbances between aliens and veterans at Calgary, Medicine Hat and other points. One police official expressed concern that the aliens had shown little appreciation of the "fair treatment meted out to them" and were following extremists. "Bolshevism finds a fertile field among the aliens and is assiduously cultivated by the ardent agitator."<sup>4</sup>

The Canadianization campaign which was being carried on by churches and voluntary organizations was seen by some as an antidote to socialism and class conflict. One police

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<sup>1</sup>Ironically, P. Christophers, one of the O.B.U. organizers run out of Drumheller, was elected to the Alberta legislature in 1921 from the Rocky Mountain Riding.

<sup>2</sup>Byron, "The Menace".

<sup>3</sup>C.H., Aug. 12, 1919.

<sup>4</sup>R.N.W.M.P. Reports, 1919, p. 14.



report regarded assimilation as the answer to the radical problem. "The assimilation of our large alien population is of the greatest importance and it demands wise and sympathetic action and constant attention."<sup>1</sup> The Calgary Herald reported the solution that Drumheller citizens saw to the problem of radical activities:

What the decent law-abiding citizens of Drumheller want. . . is to have an educational campaign undertaken at once so that the foreigners who are dominated by English-speaking agitators may see the situation in the proper light. 2

Some believed that deportation was the only alternative to Canadianization.

This hostility towards enemy aliens and foreign radicals resulted in demands for tighter immigration restrictions. These were given greater impetus by the serious economic problems in the post-war period, as well as the fear that undesirable immigrants would come to Canada as a result of political upheaval in Europe.<sup>3</sup> As D.L. Redman, Calgary's unionist M.P., argued during the debate on the immigration bill, it was inconceivable that further enemy alien immigration be allowed. The policy as announced by the Minister of the Interior

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<sup>1</sup>R.N.W.M.P. Reports, 1919, p. 14.

<sup>2</sup>C.H., Aug. 11, 1919.

<sup>3</sup>Belkin, Through Narrow Gates, p. 101.





J.A. Calder, was to encourage farmers and farm help and domestic servants and to discourage skilled and unskilled labor of the artisan class until all returned soldiers were settled.<sup>1</sup> The 1919 immigration act enlarged the list of causes under which immigration rights could be refused; it gave the government power by Order in Council to prohibit persons from entering Canada for either a stated period or permanently, and for any reason that might be deemed advisable.<sup>2</sup> Another provision excluded immigrants who believed in the overthrow of the government: an explicit victory for the anti-radical nativists.<sup>3</sup> The Act provided for continued regulation of the immigration flow by privy council orders. Discretionary powers were given to the admitting officers; section 39 made it possible to exclude a whole nationality, and another section introduced a literacy test.

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<sup>1</sup>C.A.R., 1919, p. 588.

<sup>2</sup>C.A.R., 1919, p. 588.

<sup>3</sup>During the debates on the immigration bill, D.L. Redman, Calgary's M.P., expressed his sympathy with the returned soldiers who believed that Bolshevism would have to be ruthlessly stamped out. House of Commons Debates, Feb.25, 1919, p. 16.

<sup>4</sup>Calgary's unionist M.P., T.M. Tweedie, argued in favor of the literacy test on the grounds that literacy was necessary for them to learn about political conditions in Canada so that political corruption could be avoided. (House of Commons Debates, May 1, 1919, p. 1963.) The U.S. had passed a literacy bill in February, 1917. Higham, Strangers, p.203.



Another Order in Council on June 9 prohibited the landing of enemy aliens.<sup>1</sup> An amendment which would have shut out immigrants from the south-eastern portion of Europe for five years, was withdrawn after some discussion, the minister explaining that officials of the immigration department had reported that the plan would be difficult to work out.<sup>2</sup>

Another Order in Council<sup>3</sup> increased the amount of required landing money to \$250, but an exemption was made for farm workers and domestics. Even more restrictive measures were to be given form in a 1923 immigration bill which classified eastern European nations as "unpreferred", thus making it more difficult for them to enter Canada than for British and American immigrants.<sup>4</sup>

With increasing discontent among farmers, anti-radical nativist sentiment became focused on Americans who were leading farm groups, but it could not compare in

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<sup>1</sup>Including Austrians, Germans, and Bulgarian Jews. The government eventually accepted the suggestion of the Canadian Jewish Congress to exempt Jewish citizens of former enemy alien countries but Orders in Council referring to passports and continuous journey were applied, making almost every Jewish immigrant subject to deportation.

<sup>2</sup>L.H., May 10, 1919.

<sup>3</sup>P.C., #2668.

<sup>4</sup>P.C., #183 and 185 Jan. 31, 1923.



intensity with the sentiment directed against European immigrant radicals. Much of the anti-radical nativist criticism came from Britain; a writer in the Quarterly Review stated that direct legislation and prohibition were due to the "contagion of American ideas."<sup>1</sup> One Ontario M.P. attacked Henry Wise Wood as a Marxist, American populist, and annexationist.<sup>2</sup> The head of the Canadian Manufacturers Association opposed the reciprocity proposals in the farmer's platform as a danger to Canadian national existence and a result of the presence of the American settler.<sup>3</sup> These sentiments gained little support in Alberta where organized farmers formed probably the most powerful economic group in the province, and Alberta newspapers defended Wood.<sup>4</sup> The attempt by the Conservatives in the 1921 election to scare off support for the Progressives with fears of annexation were fruitless: of the 43 prairie members of parliament, only four were not Progressives.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Anonymous, "The Agrarian Movement in Canada", The Quarterly Review, London, 1921, p. 99-100.

<sup>2</sup>Colonel Currie, C.A., March 19, 1919.

<sup>3</sup>G.G.G., June 26, 1918, p. 10, quoted in W. Rolphe, Henry Wise Wood (Toronto, 1950), p. 71.

<sup>4</sup>C.A., March 21, 1919.

<sup>5</sup>Paul F. Sharp, Agrarian Revolt in Western Canada, (Minneapolis, 1948), p. 149-150.



### CONCLUSION

Nativism was not limited to socially marginal elements of the society in the period from 1880 to 1920. Most middle-class politicians and newspaper editors in urban areas whose role was to define public issues expressed nativist sentiments during some portion of the forty year period which we have discussed. Although party lines were not significant determinants of attitudes toward immigrants before 1900 because of the nonpartisan political system, they came to play an increasingly important part after this date as party lines became more closely drawn.

Conservatives, who formed only a small portion of the opinion leaders, were the most consistent nativists. The Conservatives' nativism stemmed from their fear that British institutions might be undermined, their belief that they could gain political support by appealing to middle and working class ethnic prejudices, and from the fact that the immigrants consistently voted Liberal. Liberals in Alberta (particularly -- before 1905 -- the influential editor of the Edmonton Bulletin, Frank Oliver) were not free of nativist sentiments, but they generally favoured immigration as necessary for the economic development of the province, and came to the defence of eastern European immigrants when Conservatives wanted to deprive them of civil rights. Liberals were also under pressure to defend the federal Liberals' immigration policy. Both Liberals and Conservatives were





anti-Chinese, but before 1911, Liberals, who had to be more aware of imperial obligations because a Liberal government was in power, were not as anti-Japanese as the Conservatives. The Conservatives' opposition to "Continental" European immigration was not a particularly successful vote getter. Indeed, it hurt their chances of political success by alienating potential immigrant support. Once Conservatives began to realize this, their attack on these immigrants became less strident. The victory of the Conservatives in the 1911 federal election also temporarily put a damper on the Conservatives' nativism since the party was now responsible for immigration policy. But deep rooted nativist sentiments remained in the Conservative party and re-emerged in 1917 when Conservatives feared that eastern European immigrants would vote against conscription. During the war period, patriotic organizations, which often had close ties with the Conservative party, exceeded the Conservatives in degree of intensity of nativistic sentiments.

The differences of opinion between "Liberal" and "Conservative" newspapers and politicians and other opinion leaders on the immigration question did not stem primarily from basic value differences or from different economic interests: both shared a common set of middle class<sup>1</sup> and usually Protestant values. The existence of this communality of values is apparent from the consensus on the relative ranking of different ethnic groups (those most remote culturally and "racially" were considered least desirable),

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<sup>1</sup>The content of middle-class values was different, in part, from present day middle-class values. For the best analysis of these values see A.R.M. Lower, Canadians in the Making (Toronto, 1958)



the consensus on those cultural characteristics which violated these values (Mormon polygamy; eastern European illiteracy, standards of living, criminality and intemperance; and Chinese sanitation practices, gambling, and use of drugs) and the consensus on the need for assimilation to these values in order to prevent stratification along ethnic or class lines.<sup>1</sup> Cultural pluralism was not one of the values which formed part of this consensus. Opinion leaders in both parties, most of whom came from relatively homogeneous areas in the Maritimes and Ontario, were concerned about the breakdown in social homogeneity and advocated assimilation programs in order to break down and prevent the growth of social and ethnic stratification.

Hostility towards eastern Europeans and Orientals was not limited to middle-class opinion leaders. There is no question that many British and Canadian workers regarded most eastern Europeans and Orientals with condescension or even contempt. While women in Alberta were not as articulate as men since they were confined generally to traditional roles, there are no discernible difference between middle-class men and women in their attitudes toward minority groups.

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<sup>1</sup>The amount of pressure which existed for conformity to these values leads one to wonder about the value of individualism in Alberta's frontier society. But the existence of these pressures may point to the fact that Alberta's society was relatively egalitarian since, as De Tocqueville argued in Democracy in America, there seems to be an intimate connection between egalitarianism and conformity.



There were minor rural-urban and sectional differences in the response to foreign immigration. The immigration question was more important to the urban press, which regarded national issues as part of its proper concern, than to the rural press, which usually limited itself to local issues. Since the Conservative party was stronger in the urban areas than it was in rural areas, the urban press was generally more nativist. Other evidence indicates that ethnic hostility was more intense in towns and cities where job and status competition was greater than in rural areas. The opposition which was expressed in the rural press to immigration was usually not directed at immigrant groups within the areas since social solidarity and ethnic tolerance were necessary corollaries of the newspapers' desire to promote the future of the areas. Egalitarianism and neighbourliness were also more firmly established in rural areas. The fact that most of the rural newspapers supported the Liberal party<sup>1</sup> put another restraint on nativism.

Sectional differences were not significant but generally the newspapers and politicians closest to the largest concentration of a minority group were most hostile:

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<sup>1</sup>The support of the rural press for the Liberals stemmed partly from the rural Ontario background of many of the editors, partly from the fact that the federal Liberal party was more sympathetic than the Conservatives to farm interests, and from Liberal party patronage through printing contracts.



hostility towards "Galicians" was most intense in northern Alberta, hostility towards Germans was most powerful in Calgary and hostility towards Hungarians, Orientals and Hutterites was strongest in southern Alberta.<sup>1</sup>

The Marxist belief<sup>2</sup> that capitalists propagated nativism and prejudice for the purpose of stigmatizing a group as inferior in order to justify exploitation of the group, cannot, I think, be taken seriously as an adequate explanation of nativism in Alberta. The entrepreneurs who stood to benefit economically from the presence of immigrants wanted to promote tolerance toward them so nativists would not exclude them from the country. Even though negative stereotypes did develop which could be used to justify exploitation, there is no evidence that capitalists were the primary purveyors of these stereotypes -- the working class promoted the negative stereotype of the Chinese, and negative stereotypes

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<sup>1</sup>The sectional response to the Mormons reversed this pattern as the Calgary and Edmonton newspapers were most hostile. This is probably because the Mormons, unlike the Chinese and Galicians, were able to read and buy their local newspapers. This type of analysis can easily degenerate, however, since it does not take into account the personalities of editors.

<sup>2</sup>For an example of this argument see O.C. Cox, Caste, Class and Race (New York, 1948), p. 393.





developed around primarily agricultural groups like Mormons, Ukrainians, and Hutterites where there was little possibility of economic exploitation. Some Conservatives opposed immigration when it was clearly not in their economic interests to do so. Notions that certain minority groups were undesirable or inferior stemmed from ethnocentrism and concomitant notions of social evolution - i.e., that the Anglo-Saxon people and their traditions were superior - rather than from calculated economic motives.

Nor were economic motives the primary cause of the English-speaking workers' hostility toward central and eastern Europeans and Orientals. European workers did provide some competition for Canadian workers, but hostility stemmed more from the same ethnocentrism which motivated the middle class as well as from status anxieties. Hostility which developed between Austro-Hungarian and English-speaking workers during World War I can be explained primarily in terms of lingering ethnocentrism combined with nationalistic fears that these immigrants were loyal to an enemy power, rather than in terms of job competition.

If fears that immigrants would undermine Anglo-Saxon institutions of self government, destroy the relative homogeneity of the west, and challenge revered middle-class patterns of life were the main causes of nativism before



World War I,<sup>1</sup> what were the reasons for different levels of intensity at different periods of time? The peak of nativism from 1898 to 1902 was a function of the large influx of eastern, central and southern Europeans during this period. Had the influx been smaller, or spread out over a longer period of time, attitudes toward the group itself would not have been significantly different, but there would not have been as much concern about the possible negative effects of these immigrants. The level of hostility towards Chinese was also in part a function of numbers. Anti-Oriental sentiment in Alberta would have been greater had there been more Chinese.

Nativism during World War I was caused simply by fears of German disloyalty, but the Germans also became a "legitimate" scapegoat for all the frustrations and anxieties which the war brought. Anti-radical nativist fears after the war were direct responses to labor unrest, but these fears and resentments also stemmed from job competition and from lingering hostility towards enemy aliens.

There does not appear to be any clear connection between nativist sentiment and economic conditions - nativist sentiment appeared in times of economic prosperity and recession. Anti-radical nativist sentiment at the end of the

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<sup>1</sup>These three arguments were not analytically distinct, but the three were usually used separately in the discussion of immigration. The opposition to certain immigrant groups cannot, however, be explained entirely in terms of the "rational" arguments which were used. The image of minority groups often served as a foil: a picture of what native Canadians were not. The projection of negative characteristics onto minority groups served to reinforce the positive self-image of the dominant groups.



war was aggravated by economic conditions, but there was no real connection between anti-Oriental sentiment and economic conditions. It is, however, difficult to draw any firm conclusions on this question since from 1896 to the end of World War I, economic conditions were generally good. The recession in 1913 and 1914 had no significant impact on attitudes.

The timing of elections had more influence than economic conditions on attitudes toward minority groups. Both parties strained to be the most anti-Chinese at election time, Conservatives played up their anti-Galician and anti-Doukhobor stand at election time, and both Liberals and Conservatives were most pro-Mormon at election time. The impact of election timing on attitudes was not due solely to the desire to obtain votes: issues of public importance received more attention at these times. This was particularly true of a question like immigration where there were few striking events which might have brought the question into focus at other periods. But in Alberta, immigration was never the major issue in any of the federal or provincial elections before 1920.

The absence in Alberta of more virulent forms of nativism such as anti-immigrant organizations, large scale riots, or mass expulsions, and any number of ways of depriving people of their civil rights, can be attributed to a number of factors; the ascendancy of the Liberal party (which was generally committed to defending immigration), the pervasiveness of



Christian and British "fair play" values, economic prosperity and the contribution which the immigrants made to this prosperity, the predominantly rural settlement of the immigrants (thus avoiding the social problems of urban immigrant slums), and job competition and immigrant political power. Nor could nativism develop easily in an area where immigrants were arriving at an early stage of community development before social arrangements were firmly fixed: the social fluidity and egalitarianism of the frontier promoted tolerance. Labor and farm organizations which grew rapidly after the turn of the century usually played down ethnic difference and promoted ethnic tolerance as necessary for class or occupational solidarity. Nor can the urgency of the problems of survival be discounted as a factor restraining nativism: a significant proportion of native-Canadians (especially in farming areas), were usually indifferent toward the social questions which immigration raised. Tolerance of ethnic and religious differences was also aided by the presence of French-Canadian Catholics whose religious rights had been given certain constitutional guarantees. Their presence inhibited the development of a government policy of coercive assimilation, although assimilationist sentiment was widespread on a popular level.

The heterogeneity and educational level of the population do not appear to have had any clear cut effects on nativism. Some saw each new group as just another





challenge to the already insurmountable task of achieving social solidarity, while others saw existing diversity as justification for further diversity. A more highly educated populace would not necessarily have been more tolerant since as has been noted, there were strong racist currents in the intellectual community in western society during this period.

Although it is hazardous to compare the response of a province as sparsely populated as Alberta to the whole of the United States, there are some notable similarities first in the ideas, and second in the social groups who advanced the ideas. Although racist sentiments, particularly fears of racial deterioration through intermarriage, did not develop to the same degree in English Canada, including Alberta, as they did in the United States, the same "Anglo-Saxon" tradition which formed the touchstone of nativist values in the United States was equally if not more important in English Canada. But anti-Catholicism and anti-radicalism were minor forces when Canada is compared to the United States. Whatever the prevailing American attitude toward assimilation - either anglo-conformity or the melting pot - there is no question that the prevailing attitude in English Canada, including Alberta, was not cultural pluralism.

In comparing anti-Oriental sentiment in British Columbia with anti-Oriental sentiment in Alberta, we find



that anti-Chinese sentiment was not as virulent in Alberta since the working class was smaller, organized labor was weaker, there were fewer Chinese, and the Chinese did not compete directly with white workers.

The importance of the study of nativism in Alberta extends beyond the insights it gives into the values of Canadians. Nativist attitudes were influential in the formation of federal government policy toward immigrants: Frank Oliver shaped Canada's first significant restrictive immigration acts of 1906 and 1910, R. B. Bennett influenced the introduction of the British Nationality Act in 1914 which tightened naturalization requirements, and Alberta's Conservative politicians influenced the introduction of the War-time Elections Act in 1917 which disfranchised enemy aliens.

Unfavourable attitudes toward minority groups also profoundly affected aspects of Alberta's social structure including residential patterns, occupational stratification, inter-marriage rates, and minority groups solidarity. For example, the growth of Ukrainian nationalism in western Canada during World War I was partially in response to the unfavourable attitudes which existed towards Ukrainians: one of the reasons for the establishment of Ukrainian ethnic organizations (like those of many other eastern European groups) was to enhance the status of the



group<sup>1</sup>. Ironically, nativists contributed to the very lack of social solidarity which was one of their primary concerns -- immigrants were less likely to leave segregated residential areas, to be upwardly mobile, or to intermarry, when attitudes toward them were unfavourable.

Nativism also affected the province's political and religious development. The Conservative party compromised any remaining hope it might have had of becoming a viable alternative to the Liberal party by alienating American support through its anti-Americanism and "enemy alien" support through its introduction of disfranchisement. The low status of eastern European immigrant groups helps explain some of the causes for immigrant support of radical labor organizations

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<sup>1</sup>Ukrainian nationalism was strongest in urban centers where there was a higher proportion of educated Ukrainians and a greater degree of discrimination than in rural areas.



and later of Social Credit which promised to better their status in this world and of immigrant support for fundamentalist sects which promised to better their status in the next world, and accepted them into their congregations on an equal status with "Anglo-Saxons".<sup>1</sup> The antagonism which existed between ethnic groups in some areas contributed to the social disintegration which occurred during the depression. In Hanna, for example, Jean Burnet found that antagonism between the Anglo-Saxon townspeople and German Russian farmers (which had its foundations in the World War I period) contributed to social disintegration which caused both groups to turn to Aberhart's utopian appeal.<sup>2</sup> The weakness of organized labor in Alberta is also partially attributable to the ethnic tensions among the working class which existed in some areas of the province.

Some of the attitudes which developed in the period before 1920 lingered afterward -- not only in the early 1920's with Albertans' support for tightening of restrictions on eastern European and Oriental immigration, but into the late 20's, with the development of the Ku Klux Klan (which drew on anti-immigrant as well as anti-Catholic sentiments) and the development of opposition to Mennonite immigration. Social and economic discrimination against eastern Europeans became widespread

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<sup>1</sup>W.E. Mann, Sect, Cult and Church in Alberta (Toronto, 1955), p. 154.

<sup>2</sup>Jean Burnet, Next-Year Country (Toronto, 1951).





during the depression. The objections which had been raised to the Hutterites were again drawn on during World War II, and even later.



EPILOGUE

A study of nativism in Alberta before 1920 does not provide much source material for patriotic history. If a study of nativism tarnishes the careers of some men, it should be remembered that attitudes toward immigrants were only one (very often minor) part of the attitudes and careers of public figures, and no attempt has been made to assess their total careers. This is not to say that nativist fears have always been chimerical and irrational since, in some cases, immigrants did threaten values which were deeply held. In the main, however, nativist fears were unfounded and Mormons, Hungarians, Chinese, Ukrainians, Japanese, Italians, Germans, Poles, Doukhobors, Mennonites, and Hutterites have made important contributions to the economic, social, political, cultural, and spiritual life of the province.<sup>1</sup> Albertans do have cause for pride in the degree to which tolerance towards immigrants has now been established as a basic cultural norm, even though there are still some glaring exceptions to this.<sup>2</sup> Intolerance is not a major problem in Alberta now. In fact, I would argue that the degree of tolerance which now exists is partially due to what is fast becoming a major problem in many societies: anomie or normlessness which is caused in part by cultural pluralism.

<sup>1</sup>See my Land of the Second Chance (Lethbridge, 1971).

<sup>2</sup>I have reference here to the attitudes of farm and patriotic groups toward Hutterites, and of a few nationalist intellectuals and students towards Americans in Canada. Nor has tolerance toward native peoples been firmly established.



## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

In the absence of collections of personal papers of Alberta politicians the newspapers of the period become the most important single source of information. Newspapers were usually more interested in the political side of immigration, (i.e. the desirability of immigration from certain parts of Europe) and there was little attempt to describe the life of immigrants in any detailed manner. It would be almost impossible to piece together a picture of immigrant life from newspaper accounts; the comments on specific minority groups tell us more about the people making the judgments than they do about the minority groups. The Canadian Annual Review often summarized events in Alberta which might be difficult to piece together from newspaper accounts. The periodical articles by Canadian journalists like Emily Murphy, books by British travellers like Howard Kennedy and Canadian "intellectuals" like J. S. Woodsworth, J. T. M. Anderson, A. Fitzpatrick and E. Bradwin give better descriptions of immigrant life, although they are far from being works of dispassionate observation and analysis. A number of articles on minority groups in Alberta did appear in scholarly and denominational periodicals, and naturally give more lengthy treatment than the editorials and letters to



the editor in newspapers. Although our study is interested primarily in attitudes toward minority groups, these attitudes cannot be analyzed apart from the actual life of the immigrants. There are good studies of Germans, Ukrainians and Mormons in Alberta and small sections on Alberta in books on the Slovaks, Czecks, Poles and Netherlanders in Canada. The author has supplemented these with information from anniversary church histories, from the large numbers of local histories which have been published in the past ten years and with interviews with immigrants. J. B. Janz, A.E. Palmer, Jim Leong, Father Anthony Sylla and N. Tappano were particularly helpful. General J. S. Stewart gave me some ideas about the attitude of the Conservative party toward immigrants.

The House of Commons debates provide a wealth of information about the attitudes of Alberta's federal politicians, but since immigration was largely a federal responsibility, there was little discussion of the topic in the Alberta legislature. The Department of Interior Reports provide a wealth of information on the attitudes of immigration officials toward immigrants as well as on immigrant settlement patterns. The Macdonald, Laurier, and Borden papers in the Public Archives contain





some confidential interplay which provide illuminating insights into the attitudes of politicians at moments when they were not concerned with public opinion, (as they were in public speeches or in House of Commons debates).

A number of unpublished theses of the University of Alberta contain useful information on attitudes toward minority groups in particular sections of the province. The books by Robin and Philips provide the background history of labor unrest on which the history of anti-radical nativism can be sketched.



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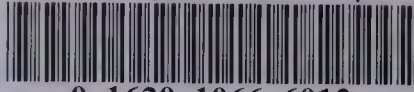
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